

The 'Abbasid and Carolingian Empires

Comparative Studies in Civilizational Formation



ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION. STUDIES AND TEXTS

EDITED BY
D.G. TOR

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The 'Abbasid and Carolingian Empires

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Academico illustrissimo et beneficentissimo, viro nobilissimo,

Michael McCormick

hic liber dedicatus est



Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction

The 'Abbasid and Carolingian Dynasties in Comparative Perspective 3
D.G. Tor

PART 1

Political Power

Inventing the *Missi*
Delegating Power in the Late Eighth and Early Ninth Centuries 13
Jennifer R. Davis

Hasanwayh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kurḍī (r. ca. 350–369/ca. 961–979)
From Freehold Castles to Vassality? 52
Jürgen Paul

PART 2

Culture, Ethnicity, and Geography

The Emperor's Ass
Hunting for the Asiatic Onager (Equus hemionus) in the 'Abbasid, Byzantine, and Carolingian Worlds 73
Eric J. Goldberg

Ethnicity in the Carolingian Empire 102
Walter Pohl

Across the Hindūkush of the 'Abbasid Period 123
Minoru Inaba

PART 3***Religion***

- Columbanus, the Columbanian Tradition and Caesarius** 153
Ian Wood

- The Rebel and the Imam**
The Uprising of Zayd al-Nār and Shi'i Leadership Claims 169
Robert Gleave

Final Summation

- Comparing Carolingians and 'Abbasids** 191
Michael Cook

- Index** 225

Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to thank and acknowledge all who contributed to the bringing to fruition of the work before you. This book, and the comparative project it represents, was inspired long ago by my years of apprenticeship under Michael McCormick, Francis Goelet Professor of Medieval History at Harvard University. Many years elapsed, however, before I could muster the funds to bring all the relevant scholars together to begin speaking with one another; it was only after I had moved to the University of Notre Dame that I found support for the idea, in the then-director of the Medieval Institute, the late Olivia Remie Constable, who gave institutional backing to the project and helped to obtain the necessary support. Accordingly, the world's first international 'Abbasid – Carolingian conference was held, in celebration of our (now emeritus) colleague Thomas F.X. Noble, in April 2013 at the University of Notre Dame, with the generous funding of the Medieval Institute, the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, and the three Departments of, respectively, Theology, History, and Classics. The book now before you, which grew out of that conference, has been made possible by the grants I have held from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

It is probably superfluous to state, but needs to be stated nevertheless, that all the participants at the conference have my thanks. Special mention should be made here of the late Patricia Crone, who not only encouraged this project for years, but made a truly Herculean effort to be present at the conference despite severe illness, which unfortunately curtailed her participation.

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Finally, my greatest debt of gratitude is owed to "the onlie begetter" of the very idea of a comparative 'Abbasid-Carolingian project, Michael McCormick. Just as the conference itself was a celebration of all that Thomas Noble has done for medieval studies, so this resulting volume is a tribute to a scholar who has made an extraordinary contribution to the field, and who was the keynote speaker at the conference. On a personal level, Michael McCormick not only introduced me to the Carolingian world, but he has also been a true mentor, a staunch supporter, and a shining example to me in every way for

nearly two decades. I dedicate this work to him with deep affection, fealty, and admiration.

D.G. Tor

The University of Notre Dame

Introduction



The 'Abbasid and Carolingian Dynasties in Comparative Perspective*

D.G. Tor

The period from the mid-eighth into the tenth centuries witnessed what one can arguably call the founding of both Western Christian and Islamic civilization. That is, while the religious core of both Christianity and Islam were obviously formed prior to these respective dynasties (in the case of Christianity, centuries before), under their aegis something fundamentally new, or so transformed as to be new, came into being. Carolingian and post-Carolingian Latin Christianity, and the civilization it produced, is radically different, not only from Roman or Byzantine Christianity, but also from Merovingian Christianity and culture, and also witnessed a much deeper Christianization of society.¹

On the Islamic side, the 'Abbasid period produced normative classical Islamic civilization; there are no extant literary works from the Umayyad period – let alone before then – by which to judge the state of Islam or the civilization that was to be built around the religion after the original wave of the Islamic Conquests ended and cultural amalgamation and elaboration took place under 'Abbasid aegis.² And, whatever Islamic culture may have been taking shape in Umayyad times, it, too, was fundamentally transformed by both

* The author is grateful to Michael Cook and Jennifer R. Davis for their comments and suggestions.

- 1 Following in this Noble's thesis, "Carolingian Religion", 287: "First, the Carolingians Europeanized Christianity as most of the world subsequently knew it. The religion had Semitic beginnings and centuries of Mediterranean cultivation so there was nothing inevitable about what Charlemagne's dynasty did. Second, Roman Catholicism as an historical phenomenon, not as a theological or ecclesiological one, is a Carolingian construction." Obviously, there is disagreement regarding Christianity in the Carolingian era; the present writer is here following the understanding – contested, of course – that seems most compelling. This does not vitiate the usefulness of the comparative project for those who do not accept Noble's thesis; there are multiple points of contact, of similarity and illuminating difference, notwithstanding one's individual position on this issue.
- 2 Although numerous attempts have been made to try to perform this reconstruction of early Islam, with varying degrees of success, ever since Cook and Crone's *Hagarism*; see most recently e.g. Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet* and Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*.

the massive influx of non-Arabs and the heavy influence of Persian norms and practices in all areas of Islamic civilization during the 'Abbasid era.³

In both civilizations, the Carolingian Latin Christian and the 'Abbasid Islamic, the ruling dynasties of this epoch presided over – and in many cases facilitated – such formative events as the whole-scale societal conversion to, and definition of, a new religion;⁴ the delineating of a cultural foundation that has lasted into modern times;⁵ and a vigorous and aggressive physical expansion.⁶ In fact, the similarities and parallels between the two civilizations and their dynasties – Carolingian Latin Christendom⁷ and the 'Abbasid Islamic World – are myriad: they include the most disparate areas, ranging from the chronology of the dynasty's rise and political decay, to the troubled relations and power struggles between the quasi-sacerdotal dynastic leader and the religious clerics; to the role of women in public life and the development of trade and a market culture; to the flowering of a new literature; and the struggles of the respective societies to cope with ethnically heterogeneous populations and influxes of migration and invaders.

Of even greater significance, however, than the individual parallels in specific areas is the greater parallel in the overall seminal role that these eras played in forming the enduring religious, cultural, and societal institutions of the two worlds: the outlines of the civilizations delineated at that time largely endured, not only throughout the Middle Ages, but at least in some respects, to the present day, and for centuries constituted the cynosure and paradigm

3 On this enormous influence, see e.g. Yarshater, *The Persian Presence* 4–125; regarding political life and norms, Tor, *The Long Shadow* 145–163.

4 In the Carolingian case, this of course refers not to the first nominal conversion of Western Europe but rather to the actualization of a real Christianization as opposed to the previous superficial conversion; see e.g., among many, Phelan, *The Formation of Christian Europe*; and, on the final split of the Papacy from Byzantium, Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter*, and *idem*, *The Papacy 563–86 and Carolingian Religion*, *op. cit.*; Becher, *Charlemagne* 81–97, and so forth. On the 'Abbasid side, one need only note that, apart from sparse architectural monuments, inscriptions, and scattered Quran fragments, virtually no Islamic cultural, religious, or literary works exist from pre-'Abbasid times; while scholars have differed greatly in their interpretations of the significance this fact, the fact itself remains: the corpus of classical Islamic civilization was produced under the 'Abbasids; see e.g. the second volume of M.J.L. Young et al., *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*.

5 See e.g. the classic article by Bullough, *Europae Pater* 59–105.

6 On which see e.g. Noble, *Louis the Pious* 333–47; Innes, *Review Article: Franks and Slavs* 201–16; and, on the 'Abbasid side, e.g. Bonner, *Al-Khalifa al-Marḍī* 79–91; Tor, *Privatized Jihad* 555–573; Tor, *The Islamization of Central Asia* 272–299; and Eger, *The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*.

7 Although, of course, the term is later; see Van Engen, *The Christian Middle Ages* 519–52.

of rulership, to the point where, for instance, statues glorifying the memory of Charlemagne were still being built in twentieth-century Europe, from Germany to Brussels to France. Furthermore, to a far greater degree than is the case with most ruling dynasties in history, the Carolingians and the 'Abbasids presided over, shaped, or strongly influenced the trends of their own time in virtually all fields of cultural, religious, and political life; hence the longevity of their memory and prestige (and, in the case of the 'Abbasids, an over 500-year long caliphate).

It was this parallel, synchronous historical role that gave rise to the present volume – the first conscious effort of its kind to engage in focused, comparative, specifically Carolingian and 'Abbasid history.⁸ By breaking down the disciplinary barriers and bringing together the foremost authorities on the formative eras of both Western and Islamic society, the scholars involved in this project hoped to cast light on some of the most enduring institutions – political, religious, social, and cultural – of both those societies.

We were also well aware of the many pitfalls and dangers associated with such an attempt to engage in historical comparison, especially cross-cultural and cross-civilizational ones; these are well-known, and have been expounded by some of the greatest historians, including Pirenne and Bloch, who were both also impassioned advocates for such an enterprise – although Bloch had far fewer reservations regarding “parallel comparison” of neighboring, contemporaneous societies than he did with respect to the “cross-comparison” of civilizations widely separated in time and space.⁹ The greatest obstacle, of course, to engaging in cross-civilizational comparison is that the farther removed the respective civilizations being studied are from one another (linguistically, religiously, and culturally), the more difficult it is for any given individual to have mastered both fields.¹⁰

In light of the known methodological pitfalls, it was deemed that the most intellectually rigorous and fruitful way to approach such a comparative

8 The only previous effort in an explicitly comparative Carolingian-'Abbasid direction was that attempted single-handedly, with correspondingly limited success, by Drews, *Die Karolinger und die Abbasiden*. A much broader cross-cultural comparison chronologically was attempted in Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* – but this latter author was unable to utilize Islamic primary sources in the original. Some recent attempts in the direction of comparative Carolingian-Byzantine history should also be noted; e.g. Angelov and Herrin, *The Christian imperial tradition* 149–74.

9 Pirenne, *De la méthode comparative* 19–32; Bloch, *A contribution towards a comparative history* 44–81.

10 For a concise summation of the major writings by historians on this subject up to the present, see Kedar, *Outlines for Comparative History* 1–28.

endeavour was not by asking masters of their respective fields suddenly to acquire an equally profound expertise in an alien subject and languages, but rather by our adopting a thematic approach and opening a dialogue among the various scholars, who could convey their insights and findings to their counterparts working on similar issues in the other civilization – as it were, pooling the collective expertise. It is this volume's premise that prompting Carolingianists and 'Abbasidists to look at a contemporaneous and in many ways parallel civilization will deepen scholars' understanding of their own subject of study, by helping to elucidate not only the very real similarities and commonalities between the two, but also the equally real differences and the source of those differences.

Thus, for instance, regarding the first of the three themes with which this book deals, political power or rulership and lordship, it should be noted that the elaboration of kingship as it occurred in Western Europe and in the Islamic world differed radically: Whereas Charlemagne and his successors, especially Louis the Pious, formulated an ideal of Christian Kingship which lasted until the end of monarchical power in Europe,¹¹ the 'Abbasids, in contrast, began with a theological conception of kingship,¹² but after losing their claim to religious leadership to the Sunni clerics,¹³ they and the dynasties which held power under them ended up moving in the direction of Persian kingship on the Sasanian model.¹⁴ These respective trends led, in the Islamic world, to an ongoing crisis of political legitimacy; and, in Europe, to "kingship by the grace of God".¹⁵

Similarly, there is much to be gleaned from a comparative treatment of the themes introduced in the second section of this volume: culture, ethnicity, and geography. To deal with the last two first: the Carolingian and 'Abbasid dynasties ruled over enormous territorial expanses that contained a plethora of highly diverse ethnic and cultural groups. This posed rather obvious

11 On which see, in addition to Walter Ullmann's classic work *The Carolingian Renaissance* and de Jong, *The Penitential State*, the concluding chapters of McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, especially 311–79, and Davis, *Charlemagne's Practice* 431–6, for a summary of the literature on various aspects of this role.

12 Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph*, and Crone, *God's Rule* 3–32.

13 In addition to Crone's work cited previously, see also Tor, *Violent Order* 39–84; and Tor, *God's Cleric* 195–228.

14 See Tor, *The Long Shadow* 145–163.

15 Emblazoned even on Carolingian coins; see e.g. Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage* 190–266; Morrison, *Carolingian Coinage* 17–31. Note that this practice continued among their successors, down to the present-day sovereigns of the United Kingdom.

challenges in terms of cohesiveness and cultural clashes. However, there was also an elite court culture in both empires, one that was vital both to the fostering of cultural unity, the blending of various customs and practices inherited from the disparate populations, and also to the production of many of the outstanding cultural achievements of the period.

The court also served as the focal point of political life in the heyday of both the Carolingian and the ‘Abbasid dynasties, and both civilizations witnessed great power struggles at the court. In many cases, these conflicts involved similar groups – for example, the aristocracy, and court women. The tones of these courts, however, were very different, as was the scale of them (the ‘Abbasid court was far grander and more grandiose), and this was also reflected in the intellectual life that transpired there. Charlemagne took a very active role in the religious works being composed at the time – for instance, the so-called *Libri Carolini* or *Opus Caroli*, which was actually composed by one of his bishops (with some auxiliary assistance from other prelates) at his initiative and under his auspices;¹⁶ Carolingian intellectual life was suffused with and permeated by heavy religiosity and devotion.

The ‘Abbasids in this respect provide a strong contrast to the Carolingian example; much of the writing they encouraged at their courts was, for example, of the love- and drinking-poetry variety. The intellectual climate overall was far more worldly and sophisticated; although important religious works were being composed at the time, this was most emphatically **not** being done at the ‘Abbasid court.¹⁷ On the other hand, both of these societies similarly featured a cosmopolitan court, whose members were drawn from all over Europe and the Islamic world respectively.

The final theme treated in this volume is religion, which is perhaps the single area in which the Carolingian and ‘Abbasid eras were most seminal for the civilizations that grew out of them. These eras witnessed the defining – and in some instances, the founding – of those religious institutions which in many cases lasted until the modern era and played a major role in the ensuing 1200 years of history; for example, on the Islamic side, Sunnism and the *madhhab*; and, on the Latin Christian side, the deep Christianization – and particularist Roman Christianization – of society, including its reorganization within the

16 Ann Freeman's series of article on the composition of the *Libri Carolini* remains the standard reading on the subject; many of these have been collected in Freeman, *Theodulf of Orléans*. See also Noble, Tradition and learning 227–60.

17 The most valuable testimony to the nature of the intellectual life of the ‘Abbasid court life and its poetry can be found throughout the encyclopaedic compendium of Abū'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*.

parochial structure, a new relationship between the Frankish kings and the papacy, and the propagation of the Benedictine Rule throughout the Latin West.¹⁸

Obviously, the themes treated in this work constitute only a sampling of some of the myriad possible subjects awaiting comparative intellectual inquiry, nor have even these selected themes been exhausted by the offerings contained in this volume; but one must necessarily begin somewhere, and these were three of the most fundamental and important ones upon which to begin working. In conclusion, this volume is meant not as the final word on the subject of comparative 'Abbasid-Carolingian history, but as the first; we hope that a long and fruitful dialogue between the two fields will ensue.

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18 See e.g., on the Islamic side, in addition to Crone, *God's Rule*, Melchert, *Formation*; Halm, *Die Anfänge* 438–48; on the Carolingian side, see Noble, *Carolingian Religion*, and The Christian church 249–74, but especially the concluding section; first articulated by Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance*, especially 22–32, and Ullmann, *Papal Government* 87–142.

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PART 1

Political Power



Inventing the *Missi*

*Delegating Power in the Late Eighth and Early Ninth Centuries**

Jennifer R. Davis

In a paper published in 1992 Tom Noble took up the question, one to which he would later return,¹ of what made the Carolingian king Charlemagne all that great.² Noble's answer was partly the Frankish court's emphasis on justice, broadly understood, in the period 785–94 (that is, far earlier than Charlemagne's governmental reforms have typically been dated). What I would like to do in this paper is to augment Noble's argument about the centrality of the early years of the reign and the persistent concern for justice³ by examining a particularly important political tool associated with Charlemagne and thinking again about how this restructured tool of rulership actually worked.

One of the key components of Charlemagne's interest in justice was the deployment of agents known as *missi dominici*, literally men sent by the king.⁴ *Missi* were royal overseers, meant to check up on what was going on in the empire, fix what was in need of remedy, and report back to the king about the status of his realm.⁵ Before Charlemagne (and also continuing throughout his

* I would like to thank Debbie Tor for the invitation to take part in the conference from which this volume emerged, and for her editorial skill and patience, as well as her friendship over many years. I am also grateful to all the conference participants for useful comments and suggestions. I would additionally like to thank Martin Gravel and Jinty Nelson for helpful comments on drafts of this essay. I sent an earlier draft of this paper to Shigeto Kikuchi, who also offered useful bibliographical suggestions. While I was not able to read his dissertation, his forthcoming book will certainly have a contribution to make to study of the *missi*. The original conference, in honor of Tom Noble, encouraged me to return to one of Tom's important essays and to attempt to develop further some of his ideas. I hope he will take this essay as a token of gratitude for what I have learned from him.

1 Noble, Greatness contested and confirmed.

2 Noble, From brigandage to justice.

3 The sustained interest in justice at Charlemagne's court does not in fact mean that the court always lived up to its ideals. For the best analysis of judicial failure, see Fouracre, Carolingian justice.

4 For the importance of delegation in the Carolingian world, see Gravel, *Distances, rencontres*; Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire*, chapters 1 and 2.

5 For classic accounts of the *missi*, see: Werner, *Missus – marchio – comes*; Ganshof, *Frankish institutions*, especially 23–6 on types of *missi*; Krause, *Geschichte des Institutes der missi dominici*. There is also an excellent review of the older literature in Gravel, *Du rôle des missi impériaux* 61–5.

reign) such agents tended to be special *missi*, men sent out to accomplish a task *ad hoc*, such as organizing oath-takings in a given region,⁶ or participating in a one-time diplomatic mission.⁷ Scholars typically claim that the reign of Charlemagne also saw the invention of general *missi*, or those meant to visit areas assigned to them and supervise virtually all aspects of life. We will return to the supposed distinction between general and special *missi* later, but the starting point for our investigation here is the idea that *missi* were an essential tool with which Charlemagne ruled, an integral component of the innovative ways in which he tried to ensure the right exercise of power (that is, justice) in his realm.⁸ As I just noted, royal agents denoted as *missi* in the sources existed before Charlemagne,⁹ in both Francia and in at least some of the conquered regions.¹⁰ Nonetheless, I contend, in line with much of the earlier literature, that there was a notable increase in the recourse to *missi* under

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- 6 For the kinds of lists generated by such activities, see *Capit.* 1, *Indiculus eorum qui sacramentum fidelitatis iuraverunt*, no. 181, 377–8. For discussion of the process and its political implications, see Nelson, Charlemagne and empire 228–32.
 - 7 Such as an embassy to the papacy in 784/5: *Capit.* 1, *Memoratorium missis datum ad papam Adrianum legatis*, no. 111, 225 (also edited in Bruckner and Marichal, ChLA, Part 17, France 5, no. 655). For discussion of this mission, see Nelson, The Settings of the gift 129–32 and Hack, *Codex carolinus* 625–35.
 - 8 Foundationally for the Carolingians: Augustine, *De civitate dei* 4.4, vol. 1, 101. And see Noble, From brigandage to justice 49–50.
 - 9 Ganshof, *Frankish institutions* 23.
 - 10 There is evidence of agents called *missi* in particular in Italy and Bavaria, unsurprisingly, given the rich sources and political sophistication of both these societies before the Carolingian conquest. In the case of Italy, Chris Wickham offers a useful survey of the evidence, noting the appearance of *missi* in some Lombard texts, as well as the difference between these agents and Carolingian-style *missi*; see Wickham, *Early medieval Italy* 39, 54. In Bavaria too, *missi* can be found in pre-Carolingian sources. Stephan Freund has argued that these early Bavarian agents anticipated certain aspects of Frankish missatical activity, namely, combining secular and religious authority figures to ensure justice; see Freund, *Von den Agilolfingern* 99–100. He does so partly in relation to Jahn's comments on Bavarian *missi* (Jahn, *Ducatus Baiuvariorum* 347–8), but Jahn does not posit a similar pre-figuring of Frankish practice, focusing instead on similarities between Bavarian and Lombard *missi*. However, as the evidence for Bavarian *missi* is limited (Freund and Jahn both point to a reference in the Council of Ascheim, in *Conc. aevi Karolini*, vol. 1, part 1, ed. Werminghoff, no. 10, c. 14, p. 58, and a Freising charter, TF 104, pp. 120–21), I see no clear support for the argument that *missi* in Agilolfing Bavaria acted much like Charlemagne's *missi* would. Freund notes Hannig shares this view; see Hannig, Zur Funktion der karolingischen '*missi dominici*' 261–5. Hannig also includes in his discussion of pre-Carolingian Bavaria *missi* of Tassilo mentioned in a charter of Charlemagne (DK 169). It is not clear to me, however, if this is simply the language of the

Charlemagne and a deluge of legislation laying out quite new tasks for them. It must be admitted that comparing *missi* before Charlemagne to *missi* during the reign of Charlemagne is difficult, given the paucity of early source material.¹¹ Nevertheless, I think the evidence suggesting expansion in the role and use of *missi* is significant enough to warrant considering them an innovation during the reign of Charlemagne, when the empire doubled in size, introducing pressing new problems of delegation. This novel use of the *missi* as essential channels of communication between the king and regions, and as pervasive, key agents in the Carolingian imperial project, will be our subject here.

This basic portrait of the *missi* provides us with broad criteria for assessing the functions of these agents. The details, however, are in need of some reconsideration. That is, the *missi* illuminate Noble's point that Charlemagne tried to ensure justice from quite early on in his reign, but the particular ways in which Charlemagne used the *missi* in pursuit of justice need clarification.¹² Charlemagne's dependence on *missi* to delegate power throughout his lands is typically seen as a sign of his effective rulership, an inheritance that his son Louis the Pious eventually squandered.¹³ This teleological narrative of Carolingian history has now been convincingly demolished.¹⁴ Yet, the story of the *missi*, despite being a clear innovation under Charlemagne, actually fits well with new understandings of Carolingian history that offer a more positive view of Louis. This is because much of what we assume to be true of *missi* has more to do with Louis the Pious than his father. In short, what I aim to do in this paper is to demonstrate how Charlemagne and his men invented (or

Carolingian diploma, which was issued in 791, or if it reflected Bavarian ideas. Hannig's views on the *missi* will be discussed further below.

- 11 What the *missi* in the Frankish world, and indeed in conquered societies, did before Charlemagne is certainly worthy of further consideration. However, I see no sustained, compelling evidence of *missi* as Charlemagne used them before this reign, in Francia or elsewhere. For example, Guillot's attempt to argue that *missi* under Charles Martel and Pippin III approximated some of the roles Charlemagne's *missi* would have seems to me unsustainable and based on far too limited evidence. See Guillot, *Des réformes carolingiennes* 15–29, for the counter-argument.
- 12 I build here on Noble, *From brigandage to justice* 53, 57.
- 13 For a classic statement of this narrative: Halphen, *Charlemagne et l'empire carolingien*.
- 14 The extensive revisionist literature on Louis the Pious includes: Godman and Collins (eds.), *Charlemagne's heir*; Booker, *Past convictions*; Depreux, *Prosopographie*; Gravel, *Distances, rencontres*; de Jong, *The Penitential state*; de Jong, *Power and humility*; Noble, *The Monastic ideal*; Noble, *Louis the Pious and his piety*. The forthcoming Hludowicus project volumes directed by Philippe Depreux and Stefan Esders will also be important.

at least re-invented) the *missi*, but in ways that would only later be standardized into any kind of coherent missatical system. In so doing, we can see how far back in the reign many of Charlemagne's innovations date and how they emerged out of a very particular practice of rulership.

We must begin with a few words about the historiography on the *missi*. As I just noted, *missi* are overseers, sent out from the court, who check up on what is going on in the localities and report back to the king,¹⁵ in relation to matters ranging from judicial hearings¹⁶ to mustering the army¹⁷ to the maintenance of royal estates¹⁸ to supervision of religious life.¹⁹ In attempting to understand the work of the *missi*, scholars draw on two main kinds of evidence. The first is the normative evidence provided by the capitularies, royal laws subdivided into chapters, which offer us a prescriptive sense of what *missi* are meant to do, although not a full definition of their duties, as we will see. The second major source employed to analyze the *missi* are charters, legal records recording court cases, land sales, financial investigations, and so on, showing us actual *missi* at work. The standard portrait of *missi*, painted on the basis of these available sources, argues that they were reorganized as part of Charlemagne's broader reforms in 802, in the wake of his imperial coronation.²⁰ *Missi* were

15 As is set out, for instance, in *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum*, no. 60, c. 4, 147. The passage is cited and discussed, pp. 29–30 below.

16 For example, *Capit. 1, Capitula de missorum officiis*, no. 66, c. 3, 155.

17 For instance, *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum de exercitu promovendo*, no. 50, 137–8.

18 Such as *Capit. 1, Capitula de causis diversis*, no. 49, c. 4, 136.

19 For instance, *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum item speciale*, no. 35, c. 59, 104, cited in note 139 below.

20 This is also due to the famous account of the reform of the *missi* in the *Annals of Lorsch*, s.a. 802, 39–41 (ed. Unterkircher): “Eo anno demorauit domnus caesar carolus apud aquis palatium quietus cum francis sine hoste. sed recordatus misericordiae suae de pauperibus qui in regno suo erant, et iustitias suas pleniter abere non poterant. noluit de infra palatio pauperiores uassos suos transmittere ad iustitias faciendum propter munera sed elegit in regno suo archiepiscopos et reliquos episcopos et abbates cum ducibus et comitibus qui iam opus non abebant super innocentes munera accipere et ipsos misit per uniuersum regnum suum ut ecclesiis uiduis et orfanis et pauperibus et cuncto populo iustitiam facerent. et mense octimbrio congregauit uniuersalem synodum in iam nominato loco. et ibi fecit episcopos cum presbiteris seu diaconibus relegi uniuersos canones quas sanctus synodus recepit, et decreta pontificum et pleniter iussit eos tradi coram omnibus episcopis presbiteris et diaconibus similiter in ipso synodo congregauit uniuersos abbates et monachos qui ibi aderant, et ipsi inter se conuentum faciebant et legerunt regulam sancti patris benedicti et eam tradiderunt sapientes in conspectu abbatum et monachorum. et tunc iussio eius generaliter super omnes episcopos abbates presbiteros diacones seu uniuerso clero facta est ut unusquisque in loco suo iuxta constitutionem sanctorum

assigned *missatica*, territories often corresponding to an archdiocese, in which they (frequently) already held offices,²¹ typically as counts, bishops, or abbots.²² The *missatica* covered Frankish lands more intensively than most conquered regions, although the institution was used (albeit unevenly) throughout the empire as a whole.²³ *Missi* were usually high aristocrats (at least after 802) and were sent out annually in teams of two, one cleric and one layman, to carry out regular circuits of inspection, that is, to act as general *missi*, or royal overseers, in their assigned areas.

Certain aspects of this portrait of *missi* have been challenged, in particular in important work by Jürgen Hannig.²⁴ Hannig demonstrated that despite a famous narrative source telling us Charlemagne started using high-status men as *missi* in 802 to ensure they would be resistant to bribery,²⁵ there is no discernible change in who served as *missi* after 802. This was a key observation, but it was part of a broader argument by Hannig that being a *missus* did not mean much. In Hannig's view, aristocrats did what they had always done locally, sometimes being called *missi* or other 'official' titles, but without the royally-given titles having much to do with how they exercised power, which was rather determined by personal ties and the effects of local circumstances.²⁶ Hannig's interpretation suggests that *missi* did not hold a defined office; rather the word was just a gloss on what aristocrats had long been

patrum siue in episcopatibus seu in monasteriis aut per uniuersas sanctas ecclesias ut canonici iuxta canones uiuerent. et quicquid in clero aut in populo de culpis aut de negligentis apparuerit iuxta canonum auctoritate emendassent et quicquid in monasteriis seu in monachis contra regula sancti benedicti factum fuisset hoc ipsud iuxta ipsam regulam sancti benedicti emendare fecissent. Sed et ipse imperator interim quod ipsum synodum factum est congregauit duces comites et reliquo christiano populo cum legis latoribus et fecit omnes leges in regno suo legi et tradi unicuique homini legem suam et emendare ubicumque necesse fuit, et emendatum legem scribere et ut iudices per scriptum iudicassent et munera non acceperint sed omnes homines pauperes et diuites in regno suo iustitiam habuissent." For the 802 legislation, see Ganshof, Charlemagne's programme; Buck, '*Capitularia imperatoria*'; and most recently Innes, Charlemagne, justice and written law.

21 See discussion of this process in Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 509–16.

22 The best study of the geography of the *missi* remains Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia*. For use of *missi* in their own regions, see also Werner, *Missus – marchio – comes* 197 (114 in the reprint).

23 On the unsystematic geography of the *missi*, see now Jégou, *Les déplacements*. I would like to thank Laurent Jégou for sharing his work with me prior to publication.

24 Hannig, *Pauperiores vassi*.

25 The account is cited in note 20 above.

26 Hannig, *Zur Funktion der karolingischen 'missi dominici'*; Hannig, *Zentrale Kontrolle*.

doing. One problem with this analysis is that it does not leave room for the careful treatment of missatical service as office, that is, as a role with defined responsibilities, for which the holders were responsible to the king and God.²⁷ Part of the issue is that Hannig was working with the charters, or records of actual missatical practice, and suggesting a conflict between these sources and the capitularies that spell out demanding obligations for *missi* and characterize them as office-holders.

Yet, when we read the sources carefully, there is not in fact such a contradiction between the records of practice and the normative sources.²⁸ Hannig is right that the evidence of *missi* at work in the regions of the empire does not entirely match the model scholars have sketched on the basis of the normative sources. However, I contend what the sources actually show us is not that the missatical office during Charlemagne's reign was an irrelevant normative construction, but that it was flexible and less systematized than it would be later in the Carolingian period.²⁹ I will attempt to make this argument by looking briefly at the careers of the two best documented *missi* during Charlemagne's reign. Working largely from the records of practice generated by these *missi*, I will try to sketch a new model of missatical activity. I will then compare this model to the evidence of the normative capitularies, arguing that the two together show us a consistent vision, albeit loosely structured, of what being a *missus* under Charlemagne meant.

The two well-documented *missi* who can help us appreciate the contours of the missatical office as Charlemagne and his men reworked it are Adalhard of Corbie and Arn of Salzburg.³⁰ Let us begin with Adalhard, who was Charlemagne's cousin,³¹ and, after a possible falling-out early in his reign,³²

27 See further Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 118–27.

28 For a model of nuanced reading of the relationship between normative sources and records of practice, see Nelson, Dispute settlement.

29 See also Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 80–5.

30 I have chosen Arn and Adalhard as examples here because of the extent of the documentation. Other figures could also serve as case studies, in particular Angilbert of St. Riquier/Centula, whose career is due for a reconsideration.

31 Kasten, *Adalhard* 13–15; Weinrich, *Wala* 90–1. My discussion of Adalhard here focuses on his work for Charlemagne, not his later career under Louis the Pious, for which Kasten provides an overview. I also examine Arn only during the reign of Charlemagne.

32 Paschasius Radbertus, *Vita sancti Adalhardi*, c. 7, cols. 1511–12; Kasten, *Adalhard* 24–35. Mayke de Jong has pointed out to me that the idea of conflict between Charlemagne and Adalhard relies on Paschasius, writing long after the fact. The story of a dispute between the cousins may have been Paschasius' context for understanding Adalhard's move to the monastery of Corbie, and thus may potentially have more to tell us about

one of the king's most consistent and trusted advisers.³³ Adalhard spent much of his time working for Charlemagne on issues of great import to the court, such as his participation in a mission to the papacy to argue the Frankish position on the *filioque* controversy.³⁴ Adalhard can be seen at the heart of many endeavors undertaken by Charlemagne. One of the keys to Charlemagne's success was his ability to get talented men to work for him; Adalhard was not only one of those men, he also brought others to Charlemagne's attention.³⁵ Moreover, Adalhard likely played a role in drafting court documents, even beyond the contested *De ordine palatii*, a text based on Adalhard's work that outlines how the royal court should function.³⁶ For instance, Michael Glatthaar has recently argued that we can find hints of Adalhard's participation in the composition of many capitularies, including some of the 802 reform capitularies.³⁷ While one might question some of these potential signs of Adalhard's role in drafting particular capitularies, the fact that he did contribute to the composition of such texts is very probable. Michael McCormick has additionally discovered signs of Adalhard at work in the remarkable text surveying religious institutions in the Holy Land produced by Charlemagne's court during the king's last years.³⁸ When Adalhard served as a *missus* one

Paschasius' vision of entering the monastic life than about the relationship between Charlemagne and Adalhard. I would like to thank Mayke de Jong for discussing this issue with me.

33 Kasten, *Adalhard* 42–72.

34 *Annales regni Francorum*, s.a. 809, 129; letter of Pope Leo III, no. 9, 67–8. For the details of the mission, see: *Ratio de symbolo fidei inter Leonem III papam et missos Caroli imperatoris* 287; and on the evidence for the embassy: *Das Konzil von Aachen*, ed. Willjung, 88–9. This embassy itself is an example of missatical work.

35 For this point, see McCormick, *Charlemagne's survey of the Holy Land* 172.

36 As we have it, the *De ordine palatii* is a work of Hincmar of Reims, ostensibly based on an earlier text by Adalhard. Precisely how much of Adalhard's text survives in Hincmar's reworking has been deeply contested. For the text, see Hincmar of Reims, *De ordine palatii*; I will not enter into the long arguments about Adalhard's impact on the text here, but the introduction to the edition provides orientation into the debate.

37 Glatthaar, *Subjektiver und indirekter Stil*. It has also been suggested that Adalhard played a role in distributing the capitulary planning the royal succession, the *Divisio regnorum*, in *Capit.* 1, no. 45, 126–30; for the suggestion see Tischler, *Die 'divisio regnorum'* 199, 232.

38 McCormick, *Charlemagne's survey of the Holy Land*, especially 154–7. McCormick has also proposed Adalhard as the author of a letter seeking the assistance of aristocrats in sending a return gift to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid; McCormick, *Charlemagne's survey of the Holy Land* 80, note 18. The letter is edited as *Formulae Salzbургenses*, no. 62 in *Formulae*, ed. Zeumer, 453–4, with additions in Bischoff, *Salzburger Formelbücher*, II.2, 34, with

thing he was doing was enforcing court ideas that he himself played a role in shaping.

Adalhard acted as a *missus* in two primary settings, which have left us different kinds of records. First, Adalhard served as a *missus* in Italy, where his portfolio in essence entailed functioning as Charlemagne's point man on the ground.³⁹ Adalhard advised the subkings of Italy, Charlemagne's son Pippin and later his grandson Bernard.⁴⁰ While the kings were in charge of military action among other matters,⁴¹ many more problematic political issues were referred to Adalhard in his role as *missus*. We see him in the records of court cases from Italy, acting as judge,⁴² but also serving as a facilitator, referring cases to local powers when he wanted them to decide them,⁴³ or sending others to Charlemagne when he thought the situation warranted royal attention.⁴⁴ In the cases he judged or directed in Italy, Adalhard not only

comments on pp. 13–14. On the complicated history of these *formulae*, see Rio, *Legal practice* 101–10.

- 39 Kasten, *Adalhard* 42–7, 68–72; Keller, *Zur Struktur der Königsherrschaft* 128–9.
- 40 Kasten, *Adalhard*, 43–7, 68–72. For the narrative sources on this guardianship, see Paschasius Radbertus, *Vita sancti Adalhardi*, c. 16, col. 1517 A–D: “Justiam vero quantum sectatus sit testis est Francia et omnia regna terrarum consultu sibi submissa: maxime tamen Italia, quae sibi commissa fuerat, ut regnum et ejus regem Pippinum juniorem ad statum reipublicae et ad religionis cultum utiliter, juste atque discrete honestius informaret.”; *Translatio sancti Viti martyris*, c. 3, pp. 36–8: “Sed iam dicto abbati illo in tempore commissa erat cura maxima, videlicet ut regnum Longobardorum gubernare deberet, donec filius Pippini Bernhardus nomine cresceret.” Adalhard was not alone in providing supervision of the sub-kings; for some important observations on this process of overseeing Italy, see Bullough, ‘*Baiulf*’. Johannes Fried has proposed that Adalhard was Bernard's uncle, through a marriage between Pippin of Italy and Bernard's sister (Fried, *Elite und Ideologie* 92–6). Despite criticism of this argument (for instance, Hartmann, *Die Königin* 105, and Ubl, *Inzestverbot* 379, note 428), Fried continues to defend it: Fried, *Kanonistik und Mediävistik* 127–41. I remain unconvinced and thus will leave aside this possibility in my analysis of Adalhard's work.
- 41 For instance, see Pippin's military efforts as described in the *Annales regni Francorum*, s.a. 806, 122.
- 42 Cases solved directly by Adalhard: *I Placiti*, ed. Manaresi, no. 25, 78–80 and no. 28, 86–9. There was at least one other case heard by Adalhard in Italy, referenced in a later case, whose records are now lost: see *I Placiti*, ed. Manaresi, no. 106, 388–96 and perduti, no. 10, 592.
- 43 Another case (*I Placiti*, ed. Manaresi, no. 26, 81–4; also edited in: Cavallo and Nicolaj [eds.], *ChLA, 2nd Series: Ninth Century*, Part 73, Italy 45, no. 50) was heard on his order.
- 44 Nonantola charter of 813, ed. Cavallo and Nicolaj, *ChLA, 2nd Series: Ninth Century*, Part 88, Italy 60, no. 29. It is also edited by Bougard, after the *ChLA* edition, with French translation: Bougard, *Adalhard de Corbie entre Nonantola et Brescia* 62–7.

resolved particular problems, but helped encourage the melding of Frankish and Lombard expectations of justice, evident, for instance, in the slow adoption of Carolingian judicial formulae into Italian legal language, a development deeply tied to the spread of missatical courts,⁴⁵ and, Bougard has suggested, potentially due to Adalhard's personal intervention in Italian affairs.⁴⁶ In short, the Italian judicial records show us Adalhard acting as Charlemagne's mediator and standing as the first line of Carolingian power in Italy. Adalhard was a sort of Italian "expert" for Charlemagne;⁴⁷ when he acted as *missus* in Italy he had particularly wide powers, not just checking on affairs as the normative sources tell us *missi* were meant to do, but making decisions about how things should get done in Italy, and determining the mechanisms to solve thorny disputes.

Another context in which Adalhard served as a *missus* was in Francia, where we know of his activities particularly through a letter in the form of a capitulary sent by a team of *missi*, of whom Adalhard was one, to the counts in their region.⁴⁸ This remarkable document explains what the men in their territory were meant to do in preparation for the visit by the *missi*, and warns that those to be inspected must prepare by reading their capitularies and considering their previous instructions, and those lacking the proper texts should get copies from their neighbors.⁴⁹ We unfortunately do not know the exact date or location of this mission.⁵⁰ But it appears to have been exactly the kind of tour

45 An example of Carolingian judicial language in an Italian record is *I Placiti*, ed. Manaresi, no. 19, 60–4; and general discussion in Bougard, *La justice* 119–37.

46 Bougard, *La justice* 134.

47 Keller, *Zur Struktur der Königsherrschaft* 128–9, with quotation at 128.

48 The text is edited as a capitulary, *Capit. 1, Capitula a missis dominicis ad comites directa*, no. 85, 183–4; also edited in Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung* 99–102, and discussion on 33–7. References here will be to the Eckhardt edition.

49 *Capitula a missis dominicis ad comites directa*, ed. Eckhardt, introduction, 100: "Nunc autem admonemus uos, ut capitularia uestra relegatis et, queque uobis per uerba commendata sunt, recolatis et tale exinde certamen habere studeatis, pro quo et apud Deum mercedem et apud ipsum magnum dominum nostrum condignam retributionem suscipiatis."

50 The key discussion of the text remains that of Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung* 25–37. Eckhardt suggests that the letter was drafted in 806, for the region around Aachen, by the group of *missi* who also, he argues, composed the *Capitulare missorum item speciale* in *Capit. 1*, no. 35, 102–4. There are several difficulties here. First, the dating is determined on the basis of relationships to other capitularies, particularly to the Capitulary of Nijmegen (*Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum Niumagae datum*, no. 46, 130–2, which is securely dated to 806). This dating is likely, but not definitive. Second, Eckhardt links the text to the region around Aachen because of its inclusion in a manuscript preserving the collection of texts compiled by Ghaerbald, bishop of Liège, a prestigious see close to Aachen. There was

of inspection foreseen in the royal capitularies⁵¹ and it certainly seems to have been in Francia.⁵²

What can we conclude on the basis of these two snapshots of Adalhard as a *missus*? First, he did not work in teams of two, one layman and one cleric, as a matter of course. In the Frankish document, he is one of a team of four. The original team included three men, but when one became ill, Adalhard and another stepped in to join the original *missi*.⁵³ In Italy, Adalhard shows up in judicial records cooperating with a variety of others, as was typical of early

another manuscript, now lost (on the manuscripts see Mordek, *Bibliotheca* 1089), which was preserved in the same area. However, preservation in a region need not imply use only in that region, particularly as the region in question is the area around the court. The text could have been preserved near Aachen without originally being intended for use there, a point buttressed by the fact that our only surviving manuscript dates from the twelfth century and thus does not necessarily reflect contemporary transmission of the capitulary. Finally, the claim that the *missi* authored the *Capitulare missorum item speciale* seems to me to be in need of further attention. While this argument cannot be made here, I will not use the *Capitulare missorum item speciale* as evidence for Adalhard's missatical work.

51 *Capitula a missis dominicis ad comites directa*, ed. Eckhardt, introduction, 99–100: “Nos igitur in ipsa legatione positi idcirco ad uos hanc direximus epistolam, ut uobis et ex parte domni imperatoris iuberemus et ex nostra parte exortando precaremur, ut de omni re, quantum ad ministerium uestrum pertinet, tam ex his, que ad Dei cultum, quaque ex his, que ad domni nostri seruitium seu ad christiani populi saluationem uel custodiam pertinet, totis uiribus agere studeatis.”

52 An intriguing hint about Adalhard's further service as a *missus* appears in a note in a manuscript next to a capitulary for the *missi* that refers to an Adalhard (see Mordek, *Bibliotheca* 216 and Glatthaar in *Die Admonitio generalis* 66; the note, cited from Mordek, reads: “De despena Adelardi de tritico que sui homines receperunt”). It is not clear that this is our Adalhard, however, or what exactly is implied by the note. If this is Adalhard, it would suggest a different interpretation of this manuscript, Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. Lat. Q. 119, than that proposed by Gravel, *Du rôle des missi impériaux*, as Glatthaar recognizes.

53 *Capitula a missis dominicis ad comites directa*, ed. Eckhardt, introduction, 99: “Non est incognitum bonitati uestre, qualiter domnus imperator in istis partibus iniunctam nobis habuit legationem suam, Radoni scilicet, Fulrado et Unroco, ut nos, quantum ualuissemus, et Dei et suam uoluntatem in ipsa legatione agere decertaremus. Sed quia modo Rado ex parte infirmatus est et ac uice in ipsa legatione secundum quod necesse est ire non potest, placuit domno imperatori, ut Adalhardum et Hrocculfum in supradicta legatione adiungeret, qualiter omnes pariter secundum quod tunc ratio permittit uel necessitas docet, sicut predictum est, ad Dei et suam uoluntatem peragendam decertando laboremus.”

medieval court cases,⁵⁴ but he is always clearly the leading figure, acting alone as the conduit to Charlemagne.⁵⁵ The length of his term as *missus* is unclear in the Frankish case, but seems to have been for one tour of inspection.⁵⁶ In Italy, he spent years representing Charlemagne, especially at the end of the reign where the records revealing his service as *missus* are concentrated.⁵⁷ His work as a *missus* thus contradicts the model of regular tours carried out by a team of two. More importantly, what he did does not match all that well historians' understanding of *missi*. Particularly in Italy he was, I would argue, the main connection to Charlemagne, and created a power network parallel to that of the subking and nominal real power. Adalhard's work in Italy exceeds the already wide depiction of missatival authority in the capitularies.

Let us turn now to a second example, namely, Arn of Salzburg.⁵⁸ Arn was a Bavarian aristocrat,⁵⁹ who quickly switched his allegiance to Charlemagne after, or possibly in preparation for, the Carolingian take-over of the duchy of Bavaria.⁶⁰ Charlemagne rewarded Arn for his support by asking the pope to raise Arn's office as bishop of Salzburg to archbishop of Bavaria.⁶¹ Like Adalhard, Arn was deeply involved in Carolingian politics at the highest levels,⁶² and acted for Charlemagne in matters of significance to the court, such as announcing capitulary legislation locally.⁶³ Arn's legal roles were particularly important; he played a part in helping draft the rich legislation of the

54 Collins, Fouracre, and Wickham, Conclusion 215–17 (this section by Fouracre).

55 For example, *I Placiti*, ed. Manaresi, no. 25, 79: "Ideoque ego cui super Adalardus missus domni inperatoris comendavi ex ipsius domini nostri auctoritate de sua iussione."

56 How long an individual tour of inspection lasted is not clear to me, at least for the reign of Charlemagne.

57 Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 516.

58 For overviews of his career: Bullough, Charlemagne's 'men of God' 146–8; Wolfram, Arn von Salzburg und Karl der Große; Dopsch, *Die Zeit der Karolinger* 157–73; Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire*, especially 69–77.

59 Störmer, *Der junge Arn*, especially 9–15; Jahn, *Ducatus Baiuvariorum* 330–3; Störmer, *Adelsgruppen* 75, 89.

60 Airlie, *Narratives of triumph* 103–4. More skeptically: Jahn, *Ducatus Baiuvariorum* 494.

61 *Annales Iuvavenses maximi*, s.a. 798, 36; *Annales Iuvavenses maiores*, s.a. 798, 736; *Annales Iuvavenses minores*, s.a. 798, 737; *Annales Sancti Emmerammi Ratisponensis maiores*, s.a. 798, 737; letters of Pope Leo III (nos. 3 [58–9], and 4 [59–60]). For extensive discussion of the creation of a Bavarian archbishopric, see Freund, *Von den Agilolfingern* 182–209.

62 Often evident through his friendship with Alcuin, on which see: Bullough, *Alcuin* 35–43, 362, 367; Diesenberger and Wolfram, *Arn und Alcuin*, especially 81–3; Garrison, *Praesagum nomen tibi* 127.

63 Schneider, *Karolingische Kapitularien und ihre bischöfliche Vermittlung*. Glatthaar, in *Die Admonitio generalis* 126–35, dates this collection to 806, but I prefer Schneider's date

years around 802 and then in making these ideas known in Bavaria.⁶⁴ He may also have been involved in revising the Bavarian law to reflect the new circumstances occasioned by the Frankish conquest.⁶⁵ Documents associated with Arn make it unusually clear that the archbishop saw his role to be the carrying out of royal policy.⁶⁶ Several texts composed under his direction explicitly state that Arn is doing in Bavaria what Charlemagne ordered done for the realm as a whole in Francia.⁶⁷ Arn was first and foremost an energetic bishop, offering advice to his priests,⁶⁸ presiding over church councils,⁶⁹ engaging in missionary activity,⁷⁰ and safeguarding the property of his archdiocese.⁷¹ Moreover, while the list of works directly composed by Arn himself may not be particularly

of 813. A synodal sermon convincingly ascribed to Arn also reflects awareness of capitulary ideals: Pokorny, *Ein unbekannter Synodalsermo*.

- 64 Bullough, Charlemagne's 'men of God' 148; Innes, Charlemagne, justice and written law 180–5. Glatthaar has suggested that Arn may also have contributed to the drafting of the *Admonitio generalis*: *Die Admonitio generalis* 62. While possible, there is no definitive evidence for this.
- 65 Innes, Charlemagne, justice and written law 182–3 for this very interesting suggestion.
- 66 Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 70–1.
- 67 For instance: *Concilium Rispacense*, in *Conc. aevi Karolini*, vol. 1, part 1, ed. Werminghoff, no. 22, document A, 196–7, here 196: "Sicut optime noverit fraternitas vestra, et canonica auctoritas probat omniumque nostrorum est utilitas maxima, qui sumus in loco regiminis constituti, synodale conloquium habere et ibi pertractare nostrum ministerium a Deo nobis commissum ad profectum totius Christianae plebis, quia id ipsum a confratribus nostris episcopis hoc anno in regno domni senioris nostri in Francia est peractum."
- 68 Especially in his *Instructio pastoralis*. While the text has been debated and does depend on an earlier source, I think it can be clearly ascribed to Arn. For the edition, see Étaix, *Un manuel de pastorage*; and for the *status quaestionae* on the text, Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik* 23–4.
- 69 For discussion of Arn's councils, see Hartmann, *Die Synoden* 141–51; Pangerl, *Die Metropolitanverfassung* 204–12; and for their impact in Francia, Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 243–59. Arn has also been proposed by Schneider as the author or compiler of an *ordo* for the holding of a council: *Ordines de celebrando concilio*, ed. Schneider, text (*ordo* 7B) is edited on 331–42, with discussion on 55–7 and 329–31. Another *ordo* (no. 30) has also been linked to Arn's Salzburg; for the text, see 592–4, and for discussion 119–22. For analysis of both *ordines* and the genre as a whole, see now Kramer, *Order in the church*.
- 70 On which, see, for instance, *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*, ed. Lošek, c. 8, 114–16. Perhaps also to be linked to Arn's missionary interests is the *Exhortatio ad plebem christianam*, ed. von Steinmeyer, *Die kleineren althochdeutschen Sprachdenkmäler* 49–54, recently ascribed to him by Glatthaar, *Die Admonitio generalis* 133–4.
- 71 See particularly the record of property in the *Notitia Arnonis*, ed. Lošek.

extensive,⁷² he was an energetic patron.⁷³ In sum, Arn was an engaged and active member of the court, deeply implicated in both its sophisticated intellectual exchanges⁷⁴ and its political practice.

Sometimes this political work for Charlemagne was done as a *missus*. Also like Adalhard, Arn's service as a *missus* took multiple forms. First, Arn was entrusted with some especially sensitive missions. For example, he was in Italy preparing for Charlemagne's imperial coronation during the difficult months following the Roman attack on Pope Leo III that helped precipitate Charlemagne's final visit to Rome.⁷⁵ His work as a *missus* in Italy also encompassed several other issues, such as selecting a new patriarch of Grado after the murder of the previous incumbent.⁷⁶

72 For an excellent and full discussion, see Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik* 23–6, discussing works authored by Arn, compiled by Arn, possibly linked to Arn, and some potential attributions to come.

73 The twelfth-century Salzburg memorial book says of Arn: “Arn archiep. ob. X a s. Ruperto, primus archiepiscopus, decus et honor huius ecclesie, qui inter alia innumera et laudabilia opera plus quam 150 volumina iussit hic conscribi, cuius vitam Albinus magister Karoli per sua scripta plurima, que hic apud nos sunt, multum collaudat et extollit.” Salzburg memorial book 98. The manuscripts associated with Salzburg during Arn's episcopate are analyzed by Bischoff, *Die südostdeutschen Schreibschulen*, part 2, chapter 6, where this passage is quoted on 61.

74 For Arn's engagement in the court's intellectual life, see Garrison, *Praesagum nomen tibi* 127. Arn was also very active in a number of key issues and debates. For example, Borst has attributed the text about *computus* he calls *Die Predigt Arns von Salzburg um 802*, to Arn's Salzburg. See *Schriften zur Komputistik*, ed. Borst, vol. 2, discussion on 820–32, edition 833–84. This attribution has been contradicted by Hoffmann, *Abisag calefaciente*, but is defended by Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik* 24. Additionally, Arn may have reacted to Charlemagne's circular letter on baptism; see Keefe, *Water and the Word*, vol. 1, 93–4 for discussion, edition in vol. 2, 467–88. Another example is the Salzburg sermon collection, which expresses many of the key ideas of Carolingian reform, now fully studied in Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik*. A preliminary text about the procession of the Holy Spirit in preparation for a council on this issue has also been ascribed to Arn. This is the *Testimonia ex sacris voluminibus collecta*, ed. Willjung, in *Das Konzil von Aachen, 809* 252–83, and discussion on 41–7, 62–87.

75 The key narrative sources are: Alcuin letters 173 (286–7), 179 (296–7), 184 (309–10), 186 (311–13); *Vita Leoni III*, c. 20, 6–7; *Annales Maximiniani*, s.a. 799, 22–3. For commentary: Schieffer, *Arn von Salzburg und die Kaiserkrönung*. On Arn's role in Leo's oath of purification, see Kerner, *Der Reinigungseid Leos III*.

76 Alcuin, letter 207, 343–5, here 344. For the murder, see: John the Deacon, *Istoria Veneticorum*, book 2, c. 22, 106.

Much of the time, however, Arn acted as a *missus* in his native Bavaria.⁷⁷ In a Bavarian context, Arn could draw on his deep ties to the Bavarian aristocracy as well as his *Königsnähe* to help establish Carolingian power in Bavaria.⁷⁸ Arn's activities as a *missus* are largely documented through records of the judicial cases he heard,⁷⁹ mostly preserved in the archive of the diocese of Freising, whose bishop for much of Charlemagne's reign was an enthusiastic litigant, eager to have his church's privileges confirmed by the new regime.⁸⁰ The emphasis on Freising does distort our evidence, but the copious judicial records preserved also allow us to see Arn hearing and deciding multiple kinds of cases. Like Adalhard, Arn presided over cases with many other people, some of whom are also called *missi*,⁸¹ but also like Adalhard, when Arn was present, he was in charge.⁸² Moreover, far more than Adalhard in Italy, Arn domi-

77 Arn first appears as a *missus* in Bavaria in 791, with his last recorded missatical action coming in 811. Some scholars argue that Arn was a regular *missus* from 802–7, implying that he was a special *missus* at other times (Dopsch, *Die Zeit der Karolinger* 164–6, 173; Wolfram, *Grenzen und Räume* 173; Wolfram, *Salzburg, Bayern, Österreich* 185–8; see also Goldberg, *Dilectissimus pater* 59–82, on the stages of Arn's missatical activity; I would like to thank Eric Goldberg for sharing his unpublished work with me). As I have argued that such a distinction does not work for Arn's career, I will not employ it here (Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 74, note 141). Hannig focuses on missatical activity in 790 and between 802 and 810, but he is considering all references to *missi* in Bavaria, not just Arn (Hannig, *Zur Funktion der karolingischen 'missi dominici'* 273–88). The possible chronological ups and downs are not relevant here. The point is the long service as *missus* and the kinds of activities undertaken in that period.

78 Brown, *Unjust seizure* 102–23. I emphasize the importance of office more than Brown, but I have learned a great deal from his work and from many conversations over the years.

79 The surviving cases Arn presided over are: TF nos. 142 (146–7), 181 (173), 183 (174), 184a and 184b (175–7; the land transfer ending the dispute is recorded in the next document, no. 185, 177–8), 186 (178–9), 193a and 193b (183–5), 197 (188–90), 227 (210–11), 231 (213–14), 242 (221), 247 (223–4), 251a and 251b (226–7), 258 (231), 299 (258–9) and *Die Traditionen des Hochstifts Passau*, ed. Heuwieser, nos. 13, 50, and 54, 12–13, 43–4, and 46 respectively. See Brown, *Unjust seizure* 106. Arn's missatical work was also reflected in the Salzburg sermon collection; see Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik*, especially chapter 6. And for the political implications of some of these sermons, see also McCune, *The Sermons on the virtues and vices*.

80 Brown, *Unjust seizure* 73–83, 86–8, 97–100; Maß, *Das Bistum Freising* 71–3.

81 Arn settled cases the same way, regardless of title, a point also noted by Hannig, *Pauperiores vassi* 320, albeit with a very different interpretation than I offer. See also Wolfram, *Arn von Salzburg und Karl der Große* 28.

82 One case where Arn's dominant role is clear is TF 197 (188–90), on which see discussion in Brown, *Unjust seizure* 117–19. In Brown's analysis, Arn in essence forces the parties into a compromise settlement.

nated the hearing of court cases in Bavaria, appearing in almost half of the surviving records.⁸³ For many years in the early ninth century, Arn acted as Charlemagne's primary agent concerning judicial matters in Bavaria, as well as serving the king elsewhere when needed.⁸⁴ Arn's judicial effectiveness was predicated on his multiple sources of authority, as archbishop and *missus*, both of which offices were noted in judicial records.⁸⁵ Arn's power stemmed from his ability to combine his role as Charlemagne's man, Bavaria's chief bishop, and a well-connected local aristocrat. What Arn did in Bavaria could have never been replicated because it was too personal, but his actions did help create the possibilities for how power could be acted out in newly-Carolingian Bavaria.⁸⁶ Arn's primary job as *missus* was to mediate the introduction of Carolingian power into Bavaria in matters concerning justice.⁸⁷

The overall contours of Arn's service as *missus* correspond to many aspects of Adalhard's career. Both had regions of specialization: Bavaria for Arn, Italy for Adalhard, which were both conquered regions. But both also acted for the king in sensitive matters elsewhere, serving as effective 'fixers' for Charlemagne. Both had deep personal ties to the king, and were loyal to him for the majority of their careers, despite some potentially rocky beginnings. Adalhard and Arn worked with a range of other agents and other powerful men, but both also dominated most proceedings in which they took part. Both served as *missi* for longer than scholars assume *missi* usually served and with changing groups of people.⁸⁸ Adalhard and Arn both introduced innovations into conquered societies – Arn by helping push the Bavarians toward Carolingian conceptions of property and rulership,⁸⁹ Adalhard by merging Frankish and Lombard practices of justice. There are, of course, also significant differences in how Arn and Adalhard aided the king. Primary among these is that Adalhard was essentially a regent in Italy, not just solving cases, but stage-managing how problems

83 I draw here on Brown, *Unjust seizure* 73, to be read with note 79 above listing cases heard by Arn. For Arn's dominant position in the records, see Brown, *Unjust seizure* 106, 120.

84 Compare Hannig, *Zur Funktion der karolingischen 'missi dominici'*, especially 298–9.

85 For example, TF 184a and 184b, 175–7.

86 Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 124.

87 Preeminently, Brown, *Unjust seizure* chapter 3.

88 Eckhardt long ago noted that the time of service of *missi* was variable, but the point has not always been recognized. See Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 516; also useful is Werner, *Missus – marchio – comes* 203 (120 in the reprint). For the length of Arn's service as *missus*, see also Hannig, *Zur Funktion der karolingischen 'missi dominici'* 285.

89 This is one of the main arguments of Brown, *Unjust seizure*.

should be remedied and serving as adviser to the subkings, whereas Arn never held such wide powers.⁹⁰

Arn and Adalhard's especially frequent service as *missi* and the expansive range of what they did that can be characterized as missatical work is particular to these exceptional individuals.⁹¹ Moreover, it may not be an accident that both were clerics (Adalhard was the abbot of Corbie, Arn, as previously noted, the archbishop of Salzburg, as well as abbot of St. Amand). Their status and defined roles in the ecclesiastical hierarchy did give both a position of influence. Yet, what most strongly emerges from our records of their work is the link to Charlemagne, and indeed most other ecclesiastics did not act in quite the same ways. Arn and Adalhard's particular ties to Charlemagne gave them room to maneuver that others lacked. However, much else of what we observed about their careers as *missi* actually is typical for most *missi* under Charlemagne. The lack of reliance on teams of two, the irregular time of service as *missi*, the flexibility in what activity as a *missus* entailed, and the importance of the conquered regions as an arena for missatical activity are most fully demonstrated by the careers of Arn and Adalhard, but all were in fact characteristic of *missi* under Charlemagne.

The most complete list of *missi* we have (which is partial and problematic in certain respects) was compiled by Viktor Krause in 1890.⁹² Krause lists 108 incidents of using *missi* during the reign of Charlemagne (this means any reference to *missi*, even if they are unnamed, and includes repeated actions as *missi* by the same individuals).⁹³ While Krause's list is imperfect, it does give us some sense of the scope of the office, and can help us compare the work of Arn and Adalhard to the general picture of missatical service under Charlemagne. Less than a third of the missatical incidences Krause notes clearly involved two *missi*. Many missions were shared between lay and ecclesiastical figures, but this seems to emerge from the fact that the aristocracy included both lay

90 Compare Wolfram, *Arn von Salzburg und Karl der Große* 26–8, suggesting that Arn was a sort of Bavarian regent while he dominated the Bavarian *missaticum*.

91 While Arn is not called *missus* in every surviving court record, his work settling cases involved the combination of all his sources of authority; see Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 73–6; Wolfram, *Arn von Salzburg und Karl der Große* 28. Compare Hannig, *Pauperiores vassi* 316, who argues that virtually all important Bavarians were *missi*, a different understanding of the breadth of missatical action than that proposed here.

92 See note 5 above. Shigeto Kikuchi is preparing for publication a new prosopography and study of the *missi*. His work will offer a much firmer foundation for future analysis of the *missi*.

93 The lists of *missi* under Charlemagne are Krause, *Geschichte des Institutes der missi dominici* 258–64, 282–6.

and ecclesiastical people, rather than a conscious effort to combine laymen and clerics. The sense of fixed tours of duty that was hard to discover in the careers of Arn and Adalhard is similarly absent from Krause's list.⁹⁴ *Missi* under Charlemagne served for, as far as I can tell, entirely variable lengths of time.⁹⁵

What they did could vary tremendously too. Some *missi*, like those in the letter sent by the mission Adalhard took part in, did engage in the tours of inspection historians connect with *missi*, but *missi* also did other things, ranging from an investigation of the conflict over a criminal cleric at the monastery of Tours⁹⁶ to Arn's introduction of Carolingian power to Bavaria. The activities of *missi* extend too widely to be encompassed in simple special/general, or limited task/regular tour of inspection, distinctions. It is true that some *missi* under Charlemagne were engaging in *ad hoc* actions typical of earlier Frankish *missi* and that others had broader powers. Yet, when we specify the change from previous practice more precisely, the special/general distinction becomes less useful. The primary differences with previous practice are two-fold. First, even when some *missi* did the same kinds of things, there were so many more of them that their missatical work marks a substantive change. As a group, they are to be found constantly, undermining the sense of them as only occasional agents, even if a particular *missus* had been entrusted with a limited task.

Second, we also see under Charlemagne evidence for *missi* being invested with far-reaching powers and responsibilities, for articulating and implementing the royal vision for political life in very broad terms. As the court put it in a capitulary:

But we command to our *missi* that all those things which for many years now throughout our kingdom we have ordered in our capitularies to be done, taught, observed, and kept as custom, they should now diligently investigate and completely renew in the service of God and for our utility, and also for the benefit of all Christian men, and in as much as they are able by the gift of God, they should complete all these things. Moreover, they should report to us about everything from thence, that is, about how he [each *missus*] has managed to carry out that worthy struggle,

94 Which is not the conclusion Krause himself draws, see Krause, *Geschichte des Institutes der missi dominici*, for example, 210, 216.

95 For more on long periods of service as *missi*, see Gravel, *Du rôle des missi impériaux* 65, and note 88 above.

96 Letter of Alcuin, no. 249, 401–4. See analysis of this case in Meens, *Sanctuary, penance; Collins, The Carolingian debate*, chapter 4.

so that he should have God's grace and ours. But who from that point has been negligent, he should feel such discipline as is appropriate for a despiser [of our orders] to feel, in such a way that others should have greater fear.⁹⁷

The missatical remit under Charlemagne was thus both flexible and pervasive, and as such marks an innovation. Yet, no one *missus* could actually have ever done what was requested in this chapter and investigated everything ever ordered by the king. Individual *missi* would carry out such a command in different ways, depending on their own interests, the needs of their regions, and the particular circumstances in which they found themselves. The point is that the *missi* act for Charlemagne, fixing things when possible, opening channels of communication between the court and localities, and knitting together a political community on a new, imperial scale. All *missi* were part of this project, with the term *missus* marking them out as Charlemagne's men, as participants in what I have called the practice of empire. The evidence from the reign of Charlemagne suggests that there were only a few firm rules about what *missi* were meant to do. They were supposed to act for the king, to check on local affairs and report back, but what activities that directive could require varied enormously. Yet, these missatical actions took place within an innovative framework of ambitious royal expectations for missatical oversight, communication, and devoted service. Both a limited task and a broader delegation of authority could fall into this rubric. What defined the *missus* was not the particular assignment of a task, but the marking out of the person as a royal agent and the expectation of participation in these new political practices.

If the special/general distinction is not particularly helpful in understanding how *missi* worked during the reign of Charlemagne, we can make a similar argument about the expectation that *missi* were a Frankish institution, gradually expanded into the conquered regions. Examination of Krause's list suggests that the emphasis on conquered regions in the missatical service of Arn

97 *Capit. I, Capitulare missorum*, no. 60, c. 4, 147: "Praecipimus autem missis nostris, ut ea quae a multis iam annis per capitularios nostros in toto regno nostro mandavimus agere, discere, observare vel in consuetudine habere, ut haec omnia nunc diligenter inquirant et omnino innovare ad servitium Dei et ad utilitatem nostram, vel ad omnium christianorum hominum profectum innovare studeant et, quantum Domino donante prevalent, ad perfectum usque perducant. Et nobis omnino adnuntient, quis inde certamen bonum hoc adimplere habuisset, ut a Deo et a nobis gratum habeat; qui autem negligens inde fuerit, ut talem disciplinam percipiat, qualem talis sit contemptor percipere dignus, ita ut ceteri metum habeant amplius."

and Adalhard similarly finds an echo in the service of *missi* under Charlemagne in general.⁹⁸ About half of the incidents in Krause's list involve *missi* acting outside of Francia, and sometimes outside of Italy and Bavaria where Arn and Adalhard focused their work.⁹⁹ Under Charlemagne, the use of *missi* was not a Frankish institution imperfectly extended to conquered regions, but a regular tool of rulership throughout Carolingian lands¹⁰⁰ and indeed one that was often used in the most creative ways in newly-conquered regions.¹⁰¹

Thus, much of the model of the *missi* scholars hold cannot be fully linked to the reign of Charlemagne. Many of the normative rules about missatical behavior (such as regulations on the timing of *missi*'s court sessions) date to the reign of Louis the Pious, and should not be read back.¹⁰² Calling someone a *missus* under Charlemagne was a way of indicating his closeness to the king and signaling the expectation that he would bring the king's power to the localities, but what such people did was not yet strictly defined. What the use of the word '*missus*' in sources from the reign of Charlemagne typically means is someone acting in the name of, and with the sanction of, the king; what specific activities people so designated engaged in needs to be investigated in each particular case. For the reign of Charlemagne, the title '*missus*' has more to tell us about a person's link to Charlemagne than about what he actually did. Charlemagne did not dream up a new way of using *missi* and then impose it on the empire. He sent out people he trusted, with a special imprimatur of his faith in them, to solve problems locally while still keeping him informed. The work of unusual men like Adalhard and Arn is what reshaped the office of *missus*, setting up a framework of missatical service, carried out in more

98 Compare Werner, *Missus – marchio – comes*, especially 204–10, 219–21 (121–7, 136–8 in the reprint).

99 Such as the *missi* in Aquitaine noted in *Capit. 1, Breviarium missorum Aquitanicum*, no. 24, 65–6, on which see Gravel, *Du rôle des missi impériaux* 70–5.

100 And throughout the reign. One example is Vernarius' inquest in Marseille in 780 (*Gallia Christiana novissima*, vol. 2, no. 41, cols. 33–4), a situation resolved in the court case in *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*, ed. Guérard, no. 31, pp. 43–6), or the early capitulary for the *missi* noted above (*Capit. 1, Breviarium missorum Aquitanicum*, no. 24, 65–6). For the context of the Marseille case, see Ganshof, *Les avatars*.

101 This too is typical of Charlemagne's rulership; see Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* chapter 5. The variable geography of the *missi* is noted in different terms by Kikuchi, *Toward 'reform' of the Frankish empire*.

102 For an example of legislation regulating *missi* under Louis the Pious, see: *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum*, no. 141, c. 25, 291. The closest we get to such regulation under Charlemagne is *Capit. 1, Capitulare de iustitiis faciendis*, no. 80, c. 8 and c. 12, 177. Chapter 12 is cited in note 123 below.

limited fashion by other *missi*. Arn and Adalhard could not be replicated, but they could set the contours of what *missi* might do, with other *missi* taking up whatever parts of these models they were able to, and interested in, fulfilling.

In fact, this model of missatical work, derived from the careers of Adalhard and Arn, does not conflict with the other evidence we have on *missi*, at least when we focus on sources produced during the reign of Charlemagne. If we return to the capitularies that set out normative expectations about the *missi* in light of what we have observed of the service of Arn and Adalhard, we do not find much contradiction. We can undertake such a re-evaluation of the normative framework for *missi* in terms of the chronology of the use of the *missi*, the nature of the expectations placed on them, and how well those expectations matched reality.

Let us begin with chronology. I suggested at the start of this paper that innovative use of the *missi* goes back to the 780s.¹⁰³ This has obviously long been known, and emerges immediately from Krause's list of *missi*, some of whose work can be dated quite early in the reign.¹⁰⁴ Yet, the historiography generally argues that the intensive use of *missi* dates to 802 and after, primarily because the capitularies of 802 have so much to say about *missi* and because of the narrative account suggesting changed missatical policies in 802.¹⁰⁵ However, this argument has now been undermined in several respects, in addition to the simple fact of early use of *missi*. First, Rosamond McKitterick has made clear that the early capitularies of Charlemagne announce ideas pursued throughout the reign, and these first capitularies reveal *missi* hard at work from quite early on.¹⁰⁶ Second, as we have seen, Jürgen Hannig has demolished the account given in the *Annals of Lorsch*, which suggests that Charlemagne decided in 802 to use higher-status people as *missi* to limit their susceptibility to bribery.¹⁰⁷ Hannig demonstrated that Charlemagne employed people of

103 McKitterick has recently emphasized the point that use of the *missi* goes back to the 770s. I will propose here a somewhat later date and will use different evidence, but her work importantly underscores the early use of *missi*. See McKitterick, *Charlemagne* 258.

104 Krause, *Geschichte des Institutes der missi dominici* 258–60, 282–4. See also Ganshof, *Frankish institutions* 25.

105 See, for instance, Ganshof, *Frankish institutions* 25–6.

106 McKitterick, *Charlemagne* 233–63. She dates the use of *missi*, as noted above, to the 770s, and offers a different vision of the *missi* in 802, but her work laying out the early legislation is essential. Part of the problem may be the relative lack of capitularies from the 770s. Of course, there are changes in the capitulary legislation during the reign, but the appearance of *missi* early on is also notable, and often in similar ways as they will appear in later laws.

107 Hannig, *Pauperiores vassi*.

similar status as *missi* both before and after 802.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, as Matthew Innes has noted, the legislation of 802 needs to be understood as part of an ongoing discussion about justice and right order at Charlemagne's court, rather than as an announcement of new policies.¹⁰⁹ I have argued elsewhere that the 802 legislation is part of a general intensification of the use of the capitularies that was sustained for the rest of the reign, and that this intensification allows us to see *missi* more clearly, but does not really indicate a new approach to using *missi*.¹¹⁰ *Missi* appear in capitularies and also in records of practice from the 780s on, and without notable differences in what they are doing over time.

A few examples can demonstrate the point. Much of what *missi* are told to do in early capitularies¹¹¹ matches well with what they are told to do in later capitularies,¹¹² a point reinforced when we remember how difficult it is to date the capitularies.¹¹³ Similarly, the kinds of missatical interventions we see in early charters do not seem to be markedly different from their appearances in later charters.¹¹⁴ What then, actually is new in 802, other than more capitularies of all kinds, which thus offer more evidence on the *missi*? The most typical answer to this question is that the system of ordinary *missi* and the structure of

108 Hannig emphasizes the use of high-status *missi* before and after the supposed 802 reforms. While I would not agree with all of the depictions of *missi* in Krause, *Geschichte des Institutes der missi dominici*, I think his lists suggest that Charlemagne used *missi* of variable status, not just high aristocrats. The point is more that we can identify the high aristocrats in the sources, whereas other *missi* cannot be so easily assigned to a status. This judgment is provisional, as we await Kikuchi's new prosopography.

109 Innes, *Charlemagne, justice and written law*.

110 Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 347–57.

111 For instance, *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum*, no. 25, c. 5, 67: "Explicare debent ipsi missi, qualiter domni regi dictum est, quod multi se conplangunt legem non habere conservatam, et quia omnino voluntas domni regis est, ut unusquisque homo suam legem pleniter habeat conservata; et si alicui contra legem factum est, non est voluntas nec sua iussio. Veruntamen si comis aut missus vel quislibet homo hoc fecit, fiat annuntiatum domni regi, quia ipse plenissime haec emendare vult. Et per singulos inquirant, quale habeant legem ex nomine."

112 For example, *Capit. 1, Capitulare de iustitiis faciendis*, no. 80, c. 9, 177: "Ut quicquid ille missus in illo missatico aliter factum invenerit quam nostra sit iussio, non solum illud emendare iubeat sed etiam ad nos ipsam rem, qualiter ab eo inventa est, deferat." See also McKittrick, as in note 106.

113 I will address this point in my forthcoming *Per capitularios nostros*: law and its uses in the Frankish kingdoms.

114 For example, in 806 Charlemagne made a grant of land that his *missus* had previously confiscated (DK 203), a process seemingly similar to the one that resulted in the gift to Fulda in 781, discussed below, p. 39.

missatica were created and/or regularized at this time.¹¹⁵ Neither claim stands up to the evidence, however. I have already sought to undermine the distinction between special and general *missi*. Even the new ways of using *missi* that I have described in more flexible terms cannot be seen as the product of a legislative decision imposed top-down on the empire at a specific date. The capitularies are expressions of particular political concerns at particular moments, not a law code.¹¹⁶ They nowhere give a complete definition of what *missi* are, nor do they provide a comprehensive explanation of their duties.¹¹⁷ Rather, the capitularies offer guidance, at specific moments, about missatical behavior. As such, they do not offer us a clear explication of changing expecta-

115 Ganshof, Charlemagne's programme 57–8, 67–8.

116 The best guide to the nature of the capitularies remains Ganshof, *Recherches sur les capitulaires*. For more recent perspectives, see the studies in Mordek, *Studien zur fränkischen Herrschergesetzgebung*, and Pössel, Authors and recipients.

117 For the tone of the legislation on *missi*, see *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum generale*, no. 33, c. 1, 91–2: “Primum cap. De legatione a domno imperatore directa. Serenissimus igitur et christianissimus domnus imperator Karolus elegit ex optimatibus suis prudentissimis et sapientissimos viros, tam archiepiscopis quam et reliqui episcopis simulque et abbates venerabiles laicosque religiosos, et direxit [recte dixit] in universum regnum suum, et per eos cunctis subsequentibus secundum rectam legem vivere concessit. Ubi autem aliter quam recte et iuste in lege aliquit esse constitutum, hoc diligentissimo animo exquirere iussit et sibi innotescere: quod ipse donante Deo meliorare cupit. Et nemo per ingenium suum vel astutiam perscriptam legem, ut multi solent, vel sibi suam iustitiam marrire audeat vel prevaleat, neque ecclesiis Dei neque pauperibus nec viduis nec pupillis nulleque homini christiano. Sed omnes omnino secundum Dei praeceptum iusta viverent rationem iusto iudicio, et unusquisque in suo proposito vel professione unanimitur permanere ammonere: canonici vita canonica absque turpis lucris negotio pleniter observassent, sanctemoniales sub diligenti custodia vitam suam custodirent, laici et seculares recte legibus suis uterentur absque fraude maligno, omnem in invicem in caritate et pace perfecte viverent. Et ut ipsi missi diligenter perquirere, ubicumque aliquis homo sibi iniustitiam factam ab aliquo reclamasset, sicut Dei omnipotentis gratiam sibi cupiant custodire et fidelitate sibi promissa conservare; ita ut omnino in omnibus ubicumque, sive in sanctis ecclesiis Dei vel etiam pauperibus, pupillis et viduis adque cuncto populo legem pleniter adque iustitia exhiberent secundum voluntatem et timorem Dei. Et si tale aliquit esset quod ipsi per se cum comitibus provincialibus emendare et ad iustitiam reducere nequivissent, hoc absque ulla ambiguitate cum brebitariis suis ad suum referent iudicium; et per nullius hominis adulationem vel praemium, nullius quoque consanguinitatis defensione vel timore potentum rectam iustitia via inpediretur ab aliquo.” I correct “direxit” to “dixit” on the basis of the only surviving complete manuscript copy, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 4613, f. 83v.

tions of *missi*.¹¹⁸ The sense of broad missatical power emerges from both the legislation on *missi* spread out throughout the capitularies and the evidence of their actions in records of practice. But we have no general legislative summary of the *missi*. Instead, what we discover in the sources is *missi* employed as overseers, from the early years of the reign, and the slow refinement of their actions through the process of using them, not a carefully planned decision implemented throughout the realm. This way of doing things is entirely characteristic of Charlemagne's political practice.¹¹⁹ There simply was no formal legislative statement of policies on *missi*. Charlemagne depended on them, eventually setting out basic guides for what they should do, which emerged from their efforts actually to oversee political life throughout the empire. What we see in the sources is a process of learning to use *missi* through experimentation, not the enforcement of a pre-formed policy on *missi*.

Similarly, the idea of a major reorganization of the *missatica* in 802 cannot be sustained. The argument is based primarily on the survival of the so-called *Capitularia missorum specialia* in different versions for different *missatica*.¹²⁰ This capitulary, in Eckhardt's analysis, has been used to sketch out a geography of *missatica*, presumed to be set up at this point as part of the 802 reforms and to have functioned as regular divisions for the work of the *missi*.¹²¹ The problem with this vision is that we do not have good evidence that the *missatica* suggested by the 802 capitulary were either new or permanent. They might have been, but the capitulary does not in fact say so, as Eckhardt makes clear.¹²² Nor, to the best of my knowledge, is there anything in the capitularies from the reign of Charlemagne that actually says *missatica* should be strictly defined, carefully mapped territories. *Missatica* are regions where *missi* act.¹²³ Given the variability in official service, one could just as easily argue that *missatica*

118 A number of significant elements of Charlemagne's rulership were not signaled as such in the capitularies; for the general point see, for example, Ganshof, *Frankish institutions* 8.

119 This is the argument of Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire*.

120 *Capit. 1, Capitularia missorum specialia*, no. 34, 100–1, now re-edited in Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 500–4.

121 Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia*, and Ganshof, *Frankish institutions* 24–6.

122 Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 515–16. Although Eckhardt does suggest these divisions persisted; Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 516.

123 For an example of typical language, see *Capit. 1, Capitulare de iustitiis faciendis*, no. 80, c. 12, 177: "Ut unusquisque missorum nostrorum in placito suo notum faciat comitibus qui ad eius missaticum pertinent, ut in illis mensibus quibus ille legationem suam non exercet convenient inter se et communia placita faciant, tam ad latrones distringendos quam ad ceteras iustitias faciendas."

varied along with the *missi*.¹²⁴ That is, what the word '*missaticum*' indicates in a source for the reign of Charlemagne is the area where a given *missus* was active, not necessarily a permanently bounded administrative unit.¹²⁵

If, then, we do not read the 802 legislation as reifying a new type or new geography of *missi*, we can instead perceive the regular use of *missi* from early on in the reign, with intensification of evidence thereof after 802 as part of the general increase in number of capitularies that tell us about *missi*, and as part of a process of innovating necessitated by the new empire Charlemagne created.¹²⁶ This is not to deny expanded use of *missi*, in relatively consistent ways, during the course of the reign. However, these changes in intensity of employment of the *missi* have more to do with the court's greater focus on rulership rather than conquering after 790, and the increased size of the empire, which fostered more reliance on delegation, than with a policy change in 802. In a sense, what we see in 802 is the volume of capitulary texts catching up with practice.¹²⁷ Use of *missi* may have increased along with the spread of empire and focus on governance, and there were certainly moments of change in how they were employed, but we cannot see 802 as a definitive turning point.

In light of these observations on chronology, we might think again about what Charlemagne asked of the *missi* and how much these orders were fulfilled in practice. The first point we should emphasize is that the rules on *missi* in the capitularies are both extensive and general.¹²⁸ That is, the high responsibility of the *missi* is stressed, but their particular powers are not ex-

124 On the variability of official service, see Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 80–5, 124.

125 Particularly as the shape and nature of the county, the most basic administrative unit in the Carolingian empire, also varied significantly. For some entries into a large literature on this point, see Innes, *State and society* 119–21; Nonn, *Probleme der frühmittelalterlichen Grafschaftsverfassung*.

126 Shigeto Kikuchi, 'Toward 'reform' of the Frankish empire, has argued that the *missi* were used to implement reform of the national laws in the period around 802. This is one example of a change in missatical activity that we might link to the years around 802 without envisioning it as the wholesale reinvention of the office.

127 Compare Wormald, *The Making of English law* 87–9, arguing that what really changed under the Carolingians is amount of documentation, not practice. For instance, see Wormald, *The Making of English law* 87: "The important thing is that here [in this case, Italy] as elsewhere Carolingian rule had more effect on the quantity than on the quality of the records."

128 Such as *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum Aquisgranense primum*, no. 62, c. 15, 150: "Ut missi nostri per Dei misericordiam viriliter in omnibus agant." It is not clear how many separate capitularies were produced during this year (809), but the complexity of untangling the capitulary evidence does not detract from the point about treatment of *missi* in this chapter. On the 809 legislation, see Kikuchi, *Carolingian capitularies as texts*.

haustively catalogued.¹²⁹ Rather, they are regularly enjoined to check up on everything and report back to the king.¹³⁰ They are meant to use judgment and foster communications, not to check off a list of tasks.¹³¹ In such a way, what was expected of *missi* was not just articulated by the king, but emerged from what those he asked to serve as *missi* actually did. The work of the *missi*, in the context of Charlemagne's reign, developed out of both the court's vision of responsibility and communication, and the ways in which able men took up this vision and made it their own. The next generation of *missi* then worked with a model created not just by Charlemagne's court, but by the actual experience of previous *missi*.

If we understand missatical service in this flexible manner, the evidence of *missi* doing what Charlemagne wanted is compelling. In addition to the careers of Arn and Adalhard laid out above, we have excellent evidence of *missi* at work. I will explore here a few examples of *missi* acting in ways that correspond to the expectations set out in the capitularies, when they are understood as loose guidelines for political behavior. One point the capitularies frequently make is that the *missi* should communicate to the empire at large what the king wants.¹³² The *missi* should not just oversee the swearing of the oath of fidelity to the emperor, for instance, but should explain to the population what

129 For example, *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum Niumagae datum*, no. 46, c. 1, 131: "Ut unusquisque in suo missatico maximam habeat curam ad praevidendum et ordinandum ac disponendum secundum Dei voluntatem et secundum iussionem nostram."

130 For example, *Caroli Magni capitulare ecclesiasticum*, c. 43 (ed. Mordek, *Bibliotheca*, Anhang 1, text no. 12, 989): "Ut missi nostri unusquisque in sua legatione maximam curam habeat ad praevidendum atque ordinandum simulque disponendum, admonendum et corrigendum necnon ad emendandum haec omnia, quae in capitulariis nostris continentur et cetera, quae in quibusque locis videntur esse necessaria emendandi atque custodiendi. Et quaecunque emendata sint vel quae emendare nequeunt, nobis omnino notum faciant, ut per misericordiam dei secundum suam voluntatem emendantur, quae emendanda sunt; et quae emendata sunt, in eadem emendatione semper in melius proficiant ad nostram mercedem eternam coram deo et in nostrum omnium eternam salutem et gloriam."

131 As seen in *Capit. 1, Capitula Francica*, no. 104, c. 5, 214: "Scire debent missi dominici, qualiter episcopus atque comes inter se habent conversationem et quomodo sunt consentientes legem atque iustitiam vel pacem; et quomodo abbates vel abbatisses subiecti sunt episcopis, in quorum parrochia commanent; et quomodo habent fideles atque diligentes legem vel iustitiam vicedominos, advocatos, centenarios atque praecones, ut omnes homines qui per ministeria eorum commanere videntur et qualem pacem habent inter se." *Missi* were not the only agents who participated in such communication networks; see broader overview in Scior, *Bemerkungen zum frühmittelalterlichen Boten*.

132 For instance, *Capit. 1, Capitula per missos cognita facienda*, no. 67, heading, 156: "Haec capitula missi nostri cognita faciunt omnibus in omnes partes."

that oath entailed.¹³³ The court sought to foster a political world in which royal ideas were known and discussed.¹³⁴ In order for this royal goal to be realized, *missi* would have needed access to royal ideas, often expressed in the form of capitularies. Surviving manuscripts that we can reasonably interpret as books for the *missi* suggest that some *missi* were indeed equipped to convey royal ideas in the localities.¹³⁵ Given that most capitulary manuscripts were not written at court, this implies that many *missi* went to the effort of having such collections compiled for their own benefit.¹³⁶ Indeed, what we can discern of capitulary transmission from the manuscripts suggests that *missi* were deeply involved in disseminating them.¹³⁷ The manuscripts also offer support for the idea that *missi* in fact made direct use of them in their jobs, perhaps most famously in a note added to one manuscript announcing that Stephen, count and *missus* around Paris, had read out to his people the king's capitularies.¹³⁸

Another point the capitularies stress is that the *missi* should investigate problems locally, and, if they cannot solve them, refer them to the king.¹³⁹ We

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- 133 *Capit. 1, Capitulare de iustitiis faciendis*, no. 80, c. 13, 177: "Ut missi nostri populum nostrum iterum nobis fidelitatem promittere faciant secundum consuetudinem iam dudum ordinatam; et ipsi aperiant et interpretentur illis hominibus, qualiter ipsum sacramentum et fidelitatem erga nos servare debeant."
- 134 *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum Aquisgranense primum*, no. 64, c. 17, 153: "De vulgari populo, ut unusquisque suos iuniores dstringat, ut melius ac melius oboediant et consentiant mandatis et praeceptis imperialibus."
- 135 The key study here is McKitterick, Charlemagne's *missi* and their books, and also her *Charlemagne* 263–6. See too Gravel, Du rôle des *missi* impériaux.
- 136 For an overview on where capitulary manuscripts were written, see Mordek, *Bibliotheca*.
- 137 The clearest discussion of this in the new *Admonitio* edition: *Die Admonitio generalis*, especially 109–10.
- 138 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 4995, f. 19v; cited in Mordek, *Bibliotheca* 551: "IN CHRISTI NOM. INCIPIUNT CAP. LEGIS IMPERATORIS KAROLI NVPER INVENTA. ANNO TERTIO CLEMENTISSIMI DOMNI nostri karoli augusti sub ipso anno hæc facta capitula sunt et consignata stephano comiti ut hæc manifesta fecisset in ciuitate parisiis mallo publico et ipsa legere fecisset coram illis scabineis quod ita et fecit. Et omnes in uno consenserunt quod ipsi uoluissent omni tempore obseruare usque in posterum; etiam omnes scabinei episcopi abbatis comitis manu propria subter firmauerunt." For Stephen as *missus*, see *Capit. 1, Capitularia missorum specialia*, no. 34, heading, 100 and Eckhardt, *Die Capitularia missorum specialia* 505, 509.
- 139 *Capit. 1, Capitulare missorum item speciale*, no. 35, c. 59, 104: "Ut missi nostri, undecunque necesse fuerit, tam de iustitiis ecclesiarum Dei, viduarum, orphanorum, pupillorum et caeterorum hominum inquirant et perficiant. Et quodcunque ad emendandum inuenierint, emendare studeant in quantum melius potuerint; et quod per se emendare nequiverint, in praesentiam nostrum adduci faciant."

have examples of just these processes being carried out. For instance, a royal *missus* investigated a dispute over control of the monastery of Mettlach, but referred the case for final decision to the court of the king.¹⁴⁰ In another case, royal *missi* in Narbonne forced a count to return land held improperly.¹⁴¹ *Missi* were regularly at work throughout the empire, doing the kinds of things they were told to do in the capitularies.¹⁴² These kinds of active missatical interventions sometimes prompted negative reactions. For instance, a man named Hardard donated land to the monastery of Fulda that *missi* reclaimed for the royal fisc because it should have belonged to the monastery all along.¹⁴³ The king then promptly returned the land to the monastery.¹⁴⁴ Jinty Nelson has proposed that the donor Hardrad was the same Hardard who led a devastating revolt against Charlemagne, perhaps angered by royal intrusion into local landholding.¹⁴⁵ While overzealous *missi* may have caused more problems than they solved, the documents that show us *missi* in action allow us to recognize that *missi* were frequent and noticeable participants in political life. Even when engaged in activities that had nothing to do with royal service, *missi* are often marked out as such.¹⁴⁶ *Missi* thus are regularly visible in the sources, doing things they are commanded to do in capitularies, seemingly often supplied with the kinds of manuscripts that would make their work possible, and designated at times as *missi* even when their actions at the moment did not relate to their royal service.

Another type of evidence for the activity and energy of the *missi* emerges from documents generated by the *missi* themselves in the course of their duties. We have already examined such a document in our consideration of the letter composed by Adalhard and his companions in preparation for their tour of inspection. Adalhard and his fellow *missi* appear in their letter as confident exponents of the king's ideas. Other *missi* seem to have felt the need for more guidance. For instance, we have a letter written by a court figure, possibly Angilbert of St. Riquier/Centula, in response to a *missus* who had

140 DK 148, with discussion in: Innes, *State and society* 183–5; Le Jan, *Justice royale* 83; Raach, *Kloster Mettlach/Saar* 12–22; Wood, *The Proprietary church* 217, 340–1, 779; Davis, *Charlemagne's settlement of disputes* 162–3; Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 98, 162.

141 *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, ed. Devic and Vaissete, vol. 2, preuve 6, cols. 47–50.

142 Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 144. See also note 100 above.

143 *Urkundenbuch des Klosters Fulda*, ed. Stengel, no. 119, 186.

144 DK 140 (also ed. Bruckner and Marichal, *ChLA*, Part 12, Germany 3, no. 532).

145 Nelson, *Opposition to Charlemagne* 18–20.

146 Such as the count and *missus* Werner who appears as a witness in a Hersfeld charter: *Urkundenbuch der Reichsabtei Hersfeld*, ed. Weirich, no. 21, 37–8.

sought advice on his duty to examine the religious practice and legal understanding of the people he was overseeing.¹⁴⁷ Another *missus* wrote directly to Charlemagne seeking clarification on a range of matters; Charlemagne's rather short-tempered reply survives.¹⁴⁸ Even if the *missi* in the latter two cases required some supervision, they were clearly hard at work trying to do what Charlemagne asked of them, not a minor point given the burdens the king placed on his agents. A very different type of evidence of missatical activity emerges from Theodulf of Orléans' poem, satirizing the bribes he was offered, and proposing instead a court-approved vision of appropriate judicial behavior.¹⁴⁹ In short, the sources surviving from the reign of Charlemagne provide us with ample evidence of *missi* who attempted to fulfill the duties laid on them by the king, of *missi* equipped with the tools needed for such behavior, and of a political world in which being a *missus* was a point worth noting.

Reading the normative sources in conjunction with records of practice, we can see an early emergence of *missi* doing new things in Charlemagne's reign. These *missi* act flexibly, but in close contact with the dictates of the court.¹⁵⁰ Charlemagne provided the framework, but that framework left room for considerable local initiative and diversity on the part of *missi*. Attempting to classify such *missi* as general or special does not fully match the early sources, which offer us more evidence of new ways of using *missi* rather than evidence of categorizing or defining *missi*. When we allow an understanding of missatical behavior to emerge from the sources, as in our case studies of Arn and Adalhard, and from a close analysis of the normative capitularies, we get a new vision of a process of delegating power that began early on, that emerged from the collaboration of court and local agents, that was often used most intensively in conquered regions, and that developed from the process of ruling, not from a model imposed top-down from the court. The initiative left to individual *missi* ensured that the experience of missatical activity varied significantly both

147 Pokorny, *Eine Brief-Instruktion*.

148 *Capit. 1, Responsa misso cuidam data*, no. 58, 145–6, with analysis in: Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 294–8; McKitterick, *Charlemagne* 219; Nelson, *The Voice of Charlemagne* 80.

149 Theodulf, *Contra Iudices*, with commentary in Nees, *A Tainted mantle* part 2. For the struggle against bribery, see Nelson, *Munera*.

150 I have dealt with this kind of flexible shaping of official service before; see my *A Pattern for power*. This approach to delegation was not unique. For a parallel in the Muslim world, albeit later than our period, see Forbes Manz, *Administration and the delegation of authority*. I would like to thank Michael Cook for pointing out the parallel to me and recommending this article.

regionally and over time, as new *missi* with new techniques arrived, irregularly, to carry out the king's will according to their own interpretations.

The example of the *missi*, who were active since the 780s, thus illuminates the process of Charlemagne learning to rule, or of what Noble called a transition from brigandage to justice. Yet, to understand fully the nature of the innovations the use of *missi* under Charlemagne entailed, we need to revise our view of the early years of this office. Charlemagne and his men did invent a new kind of agent in the Carolingian empire, one meant to mediate royal power locally. It is important to insist here on novelty. If nothing else, the scale of Charlemagne's empire created novelty. Even beyond the issues of size, however, there is no precedent I can see in the Merovingian or early Carolingian period for this tight web of communication and efforts at extensive oversight coupled with regular intervention in matters from justice to finance. The process of creating *missi*, however, was collaborative rather than top-down, was improvised rather than planned, was articulated often through its use in conquered regions rather than in the Frankish heartlands, was flexible rather than standardized, and was only institutionalized after Charlemagne's death. The Carolingian empire, in contrast to many empires, perhaps including the 'Abbasid, was shaped by its founder's ambition and willingness to experiment more than by any consistent structures of governance.

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Abbreviations

CC	<i>Corpus Christianorum</i>
SL	<i>Series Latina</i>
ChLA	<i>Chartae Latinae Antiquiores: facsimile-edition of the Latin charters</i> , ed. A. Bruckner, et al., Zurich, 1954–
DA	<i>Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
DK	<i>Die Urkunden Pippins, Karlmanns und Karls des Grossen, Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , vol. 1, ed. E. Mühlbacher, with A. Dopsch, J. Lechner, and M. Tangl, Hanover 1906, reprinted Munich 1991.
EP	<i>Epistolae</i>
LL	<i>Leges</i>
Capit. 1	<i>Capitularia regum Francorum</i> , ed. A. Boretius (MGH LL 2, vol. 1), Hanover 1883.
	<i>Conc. Concilia</i>
SS	<i>Scriptores</i>

- SSRG *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*
 PL *Patrologiae cursus completus ... series ... ecclesiae latinae*, ed. J.-P. Migne,
 221 vols., Paris 1844–64.
 Settimane Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo
 TF *Die Traditionen des Hochstifts Freising*, vol. 1, ed. T. Bitterauf (Quellen
 und Erörterungen zur bayerischen und deutschen Geschichte, neue
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Ḥasanwayh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kurdī (r. ca. 350–369/ ca. 961–979)

From Freehold Castles to Vassality?

Jürgen Paul

The ‘Abbasid caliphs lost political power definitively somewhere in the mid-10th century when the Iranian Būyids took over in much of western and central Iran as well as in the Iraqi lowlands. There were three Būyid kingdoms, centered on Rayy, Shiraz and Baghdad, respectively. The more regional character of rule is also reflected in the sources; regional and local lords appear more readily and consistently. One of the zones in which such lords were of outstanding importance was the Zagros mountain range which stretches from the mountains in northwestern Iran southwards to Fars; these mountains were – and are – inhabited by various non-Arab and non-Persian peoples, among them Kurds. Local rule in mountainous terrain all over Iran was often based on large castles.

After the end of centralized ‘Abbasid rule with its highly developed bureaucratic apparatus, the relations between the political and military centre and the local lords in the provinces took on new forms. Personal relationships were much more important than institutional ones, and the balance of power could be negotiated in ways which had not been possible before. Thus, in some regions, local lords became increasingly important as power brokers: they controlled castles (some of them strategically located on trade and nomad migration routes) and military manpower.

The present contribution is about one such local lord, Ḥasanwayh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kurdī, and his rule in part of the Zagros mountains. The contribution also covers the beginning of his son’s rule, Badr. The focus is on their relation to their respective Būyid overlords, and the question is whether we can detect a consistent evolution towards a form of vassality based on mutual rights and obligations.

Ḥasanwayh is not at all an unknown figure. He is considered to have founded a dynasty – it has an entry in Bosworth.¹ He is mentioned in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (but not the *Encyclopedia Iranica*),² and various scholars have devoted some attention to him in the contexts of their respective focus. Fragner

1 Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties* 158 no. 76.

2 Cahen, Ḥasanwayh 258a–259a.

has written on the history of Hamadān and gives a rather detailed account of Ḥasanwayh.³ In standard accounts of Būyid history, Ḥasanwayh appears as well, sometimes only in passing as in Busse,⁴ sometimes at greater length as in Bürgel.⁵ Recently, in works devoted to the history of “Kurdish” principalities, Ḥasanwayh is mentioned as well.⁶ The most detailed version of the Ḥasanwayh narrative is in Adhkā’ī.⁷ His story is therefore quite well known; therefore, in the following contribution, the focus will be on the relationship between Ḥasanwayh and his Būyid partners or overlords, Rukn al-Dawla and ‘Izz al-Dawla, and on the relationship between his son Badr and his overlord ‘Aḍud al-Dawla in its initial stages.

Sources on Ḥasanwayh are relatively rich. He is a rather prominent figure in Ibn Miskawayh;⁸ he appears in Ibn al-Athīr⁹ and other works of general historiography. Moreover, there is a particular “Kurdish” historiographical tradition which is represented in two Persian sources, Ibn Shādi¹⁰ and Bitlisi.¹¹ In addition, Ḥasanwayh is an addressee of several letters written on behalf of various Būyid princes and transmitted through the celebrated compilations of state and bureaucrat correspondence made by a number of viziers.¹² Taken together, this is a quite impressive array of source material.

Freehold Castle and Assigned Castles

Ḥasanwayh was a “Kurdish” lord, and his group was called the Barzikānī.¹³ There is nothing even remotely resembling a genealogy for him in any of the

3 Fragner, *Geschichte der Stadt Hamadān* 71–5.

4 Busse, *Chalif und Großkönig* 47.

5 Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 91–92.

6 Ripper, *Die Marwāniden* 52–4.

7 Adhkā’ī, *Farmānrawāyān-i gumnām* 122–129.

8 Ibn Miskawayh 2:270–4; 281; 364; 414–6, and Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 9–12; 287–8.

9 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8: 605; 671–3; 705.

10 Ibn Shādi, *Mujmal* 305–10.

11 Bitlisi, *Sharaf-nāma* 60.

12 Bürgel, *Hofkorrespondenz*; Hachmeier, Klaus U., *Die Briefe*; Ibn. ‘Abbād, *Rasā’il*; al-Ṣābi, *Rasā’il*, ed. Shakib Arslān and ms. Leiden; Shīrāzī, ms. Berlin. This source material has been discussed *in extenso* by Hachmeier, *Die Briefe*.

13 There are variations to the name. The editor of Bitlisi says that the man should be called Ḥasanwayh rather than Ḥasanūya, and the group would be Barzakān; he also suggests that Badr b. Ḥasanwayh was actually called Badhir or Badir. Bitlisi, *Sharaf-nāma* 60 and 62. The name of the son would therefore have nothing to do with Arabic *badr* “full moon”.

sources, only the name of his father is given, without any information about that man; unlike later rulers of this kind, the Barzikānī emirs (at least at that point) evidently did not care to link themselves to heroic pre-Islamic figures.

Ḥasanwayh enters the historical record when two of his uncles on his mother's side had died in 349 and 350 A.H. (960–1 AD); there is no information about his earlier career. The uncles, Windād and Ghānim, sons of Aḥmad, had been emirs over/of another Kurdish group, the ʿIshānīya, and they had “usurped rule over districts belonging to Dīnawar, Hamadān and Nihāwand”; their military retinue numbered several thousand warriors. Their usurpation had lasted fifty years or so.¹⁴ Both these men had centered their power on a castle, indeed a group of castles, and castles continued to be the basis of power for Ḥasanwayh as well: his own castle was called Sarmāj, and it apparently was located half-way between Kirmānshāh and Dīnawar.¹⁵ No source ever mentions that Ḥasanwayh's family had been appointed as lords of Sarmāj, they probably held the castle as freehold property. Ghānim and Windād apparently were not appointed, either, but seen as usurpers. In other instances, in the western Iranian mountains as well as elsewhere, the lordly families of whom we hear in the sources are reported to have been sitting in a given castle for centuries; some of these families are called Kurds.

Both emirs, Windād and Ghānim, had sons, but these were ejected from their castles. Ghānim's son Daysam was driven out by the Būyid vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd who probably acted on his master's orders, Rukn al-Dawla (335–366/947–976). Windād's son ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was taken prisoner by a (rival?) Kurdish group, the Shādhinjān, who handed him over to Ḥasanwayh.¹⁶

It is not stated why the Būyid vizier and his master on the one hand and the Shādhinjān Kurds on the other both chose to hand over the respective castles to Ḥasanwayh. But a guess can be made for the Būyid. If Ḥasanwayh had supported Rukn al-Dawla in his dealings with the Khurasanians (see below), this support may have predated 349–50/960–1 because the most crucial encounters between Rukn al-Dawla and the Khurasanians began in 342/955; therefore it is quite plausible that Ḥasanwayh got his uncle's castles as a reward for these services.

I stay on with the conventional names. “Kurdish” is in quotation marks because we do not really know whether he or his people spoke a language we would call “Kurdish”.

14 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:705.

15 Bürgel, *Hofkorrespondenz* 139; but see map in Bitlisī, *Sharaf-nāma* 249.

16 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:705–6.

These Kurdish emirs were rather typical local lords. There are several Kurdish dynasties of this kind. Some of these have made it into the handbooks because they succeeded in establishing themselves as regional rulers.¹⁷ If the roots of such dynasties can be identified, they invariably lie in local rule centered on a castle or a group of castles. And in some cases at least, they had these fortresses as freehold property. But with the castles of Ghānim and Windād, that was now to change. Ḥasanwayh did not inherit them, on the contrary – he ousted the heirs or was the instrument of those who did.

In the years after he was installed as a lord in his uncles' castles, Ḥasanwayh was able to expand his rule. This was due at least partly to his location in the interstices of the Būyid appanages, and also next to territories where the Sāmānid threat could be felt. The Khurasanians had pushed beyond the borders of their province, and in 342/953–4, and again in 356/966–7, they had imposed a humiliating treaty on the Būyids, and in particular on Rukn al-Dawla, the ruler of Jibāl with his centre at Rayy. It was only in 360/971 that Rukn al-Dawla was able to secure better terms.¹⁸ Ḥasanwayh must have been interesting as an ally or vassal; his two uncles had led several thousand men each, and it seems fair to credit Ḥasanwayh with at least that much. Thus, it is no surprise that Rukn al-Dawla sought to keep him satisfied.

Rewards and Obligations: Ḥasanwayh and Rukn al-Dawla

Probably, thus, Ḥasanwayh got at least one of his castles as a reward for the military support he had given his lord Rukn al-Dawla, even though this allocation is not mentioned in the sources. But Ḥasanwayh profited from his position in other respects as well. Most notably, Rukn al-Dawla tolerated that Ḥasanwayh's Kurdish followers behaved like robbers.

The Kurds under Ḥasanwayh's command had been shepherds;¹⁹ so had the Shabānkāra Kurds in Fars who started their career a bit later.²⁰ Sheep-and-goat nomads held a military potential below that of horse raising groups, but still strong enough to pose a serious threat to agriculturalists.

17 The ʿAnnāzids, Rawwādids, Shaddādids and so forth, see Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties*.

18 Busse, *The Būyids* 264. See also Frye, *The Sāmānids* 151–2.

19 Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 288.

20 Ibn al-Balkhī, *Fārs-nāma* 165 who says that later, they all became “warriors and eaters of *iqṭāʾāt*”.

There can be no doubt that Ḥasanwayh and his men were a nuisance. They are said to have robbed caravans and to have stolen cattle, to have taken away crops in the surrounding villages.²¹ Moreover, Ḥasanwayh himself molested the regions around him, and he extorted protection money and all kinds of dues which he had invented from the owners of villages and other wealthy men; these people were forced to comply, and the central government did not intervene.²²

All the same, the sources give Ḥasanwayh and his son Badr credit for having kept the Kurds from marauding.²³ But their success in this endeavour has to be qualified: even in Badr's time, there must have been problems with unruly Kurds in the region, and the Barzikānī evidently participated in such robbery.²⁴

But there are reports not only about robbery and other misdeeds. Probably more important is a report about invented dues which Ḥasanwayh allegedly extracted. Newly introduced taxes are a reason for grievances in many cases, and in many appointment deeds for tax collectors and officials in the financial bureaucracy in general, they are asked to stick to tradition and to what had "always" been the rule. It is with this in mind that the source reports newly invented dues which Ḥasanwayh imposed: the source likens them to protection money.

There are two passages in which Rukn al-Dawla is shown to react to Ḥasanwayh and his extortionist practices. In the first passage, Rukn al-Dawla recalls the merits which Ḥasanwayh had earned in the campaigns against the Khurasanians. These campaigns are mentioned in both Ibn al-Athīr

21 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8: 605; Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:281; Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 288–9.

22 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:270. *ta'arraḍa 'alā aṭrāf al-jabal wa-ṭālaba aṣḥāb al-ḍiyya' wa-arbāb al-ni'am bi l-khaḍāra wa-l-rusūm allatī yub'iduhā fa-yaḍṭarru l-nās ilā ijābatihī wa-lā yunāqishuhu l-sulṭān.*

23 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:706 with a very positive assessment of Ḥasanwayh as a ruler. Badr: Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 288 sqq. with a number of edifying anecdotes.

24 Ibn 'Abbād, *Rasā'il*, chapter 13 no. 10, 184–6, addressed to a certain Abū 'Īsā "the Kurd". The editor thinks that the addressee is Abū 'Īsā b. Badr b. Ḥasanwayh, a rather obscure person. The marauding Kurds in this letter were active around Qum which is not evidently where one would look for Barzikānī. But the letter also suspects the addressee of taking turns with the Barzikānī in doing mischief. Another letter is in chapter 3 no. 4, 60–1; this piece is addressing problems in and around Dinawar which arose because of uncontrolled bands of warriors, evidently Kurds. Dinawar is in the heart of the Barzikān countries. There is a report about a Kurdish emir called Muḥammad b. Ghānim (possibly one of the sons of Ghānim b. Aḥmad whose castles Ḥasanwayh was able to occupy) doing mischief in the vicinity of Qum, and action taken by Badr b. Ḥasanwayh against him on Fakhr al-Dawla's behalf, Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 9:31 (s.a. 373/983–4).

and Ibn Miskawayh. Ḥasanwayh had shown group solidarity *ʿaṣabiyya* for the Būyid cause, had joined them, become a true follower, and had served them so well that he had earned rights and benefits, so that Rukn al-Dawla closed his eyes before his land-grabbing and extortionist practices.²⁵ It should be noted as well that the source remarks that Ḥasanwayh did this even though he held *iqṭāʿāt*.²⁶

The second passage comes from an obituary for the vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd. There we read: Rukn al-Dawla knew that his *dawla* (“fortune”, “royal fortune”) depended on the *dawla* of the Kurds, and therefore he did not keep them from devastating the countryside and did not send forces against them. If somebody said that caravans had been robbed and animals driven away, he was contented to reply, “the Kurds also need to eat”.²⁷

We thus learn that Ḥasanwayh indeed held *iqṭāʿāt* from Rukn al-Dawla, perhaps the castle which Ibn al-ʿAmīd had taken from Daysam, Ghānim’s son. But giving *iqṭāʿāt* was only one of the forms and procedures which Rukn al-Dawla used to favour Ḥasanwayh, and we have some more clues about the general relationship between the lord and his vassal. The terms which the source gives are technical. In particular, the source mentions *service* (*khidma*), *rights* (*istiḥqāq*, here in a verbal form), and *benefit* (*iḥsān*, a frequent near-synonym for *niʿma*). This terminology is part of a larger complex of concepts for the relationship between lords and vassals: a vassal earns rights through service, and the lord showers benefits on him; in return, the vassal is obliged to more service which he then performs in order to gain an increase in benefits. The giving of land grants, as property right or in the form of *iqṭāʿāt*, is only one form of benefit, and military service is only one form of *khidma*. This relationship can be concluded between ruling lords and all kinds of vassals and retainers, both military slaves and free-born nobles. The terminology of *khidma* “service” and *niʿma* or *iḥsān* “benefit”, of mutual rights and their increase, is omnipresent in the narrative sources as well as in the collections of letters, and the concepts which it serves to express could be seen as central concepts in the minds of

25 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8: 605; Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:270; [Ḥasanwayh] *aḏhara ʿaṣabiyyata l-daylam wa-ṣāra fī jumlatihim wa-khadama khidmatan yastahiqqu bihā l-iḥsāna*.

26 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib*, 2:270, where the Būyid point of view is given: “in spite of what he [Ḥasanwayh] had received as an *iqṭāʿ* and which districts moreover he was tolerated to hold, expanding into them and winning control over such regions, he still was disturbing other districts in the mountains”.

27 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:281. *yarā anna dawlatahu maqrūnatun li-dawlati l-akrād*.

rulers, courtiers and vassals from the 10th century to the Mongol invasion, and possibly beyond, for the entire Persianate world.²⁸

We are solidly within the world which Mottahedeh has analyzed: loyalty could be created, if at all, by unrelenting generosity. Rukn al-Dawla in particular was known for that, and his generosity included “indulgence in matters that [a genuine ruler] does not tolerate from those he rules.”²⁹

This agreement under which Ḥasanwayh enjoyed considerable leeway was not to last, however. He had been able to extract resources to which he strictly speaking was not entitled, and therefore probably to strengthen his position among the warlike populations of the mountainous regions where he ruled, and Rukn al-Dawla had let him have his way, but then he crossed a red line.

At some moment, Ḥasanwayh withheld the tax income which he had until then delivered to Rukn al-Dawla. This was enough for the Būyid to send his governor at Hamadān, Sahlān b. Musāfir, to fight Ḥasanwayh and his men who now were “rebels”, in 359/969–70. However, Ḥasanwayh was victorious in the encounter. At the end, the beaten Būyid forces had to ask for a safe-conduct (*amān*) which was granted, but Ḥasanwayh’s men took many prisoners, apparently in order to ask for ransom.³⁰

A larger Būyid punitive expedition followed, led by the vizier in person, Ibn al-‘Amīd; the vizier, however, died *en route*, and it was his unexperienced son Abū l-Faṭḥ who took command of the troops.³¹ The campaign ended in a kind of truce which was concluded between Ḥasanwayh and Abū l-Faṭḥ; Ḥasanwayh agreed to pay 50000 dīnārs, most of which sum was covered in kind, in particular animals.³² Both campaigns come under 359/969–70 in Ibn al-Athīr; they must have followed shortly one after the other.

28 The terminology of “service” and “benefit” is not presented in any detail in the literature on “medieval Islamic political thought”. See Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, and Black, *The History*. The reason simply is that the authors have based their studies on legal literature, “advice” literature and many others, but not on chronicles and state correspondence. On *khidma*, see Jurado Aceituno, *La “ḥidma” selyuqī*, and Paul, *Khidma*.

29 Mottahedeh, *Loyalty* 81.

30 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8: 605.

31 Ibn al-‘Amīd *père* died in 360/971; see Abbas, Ebn al-‘Amīd.

32 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:274; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:605 only mentions a negotiated end of the campaign *ṣālaḥa* [Abū l-Faṭḥ] *Ḥasanwayh ‘alā mālin akhadhahu minhu*. I have not been able to identify a passage in Ibn Miskawayh supporting Cahen’s statement that Ḥasanwayh was granted fiscal autonomy; if we take the tribute to be an annual one, that would confirm Cahen, but there is no statement whether this was a once only payment or whether it had to be repeated. See Cahen, Ḥasanwayh 258a.

Rukn al-Dawla therefore agreed to let Ḥasanwayh expand, and he even tolerated extortionist practices, but there were limits: giving tribute may have been essential as a sign of subordination, and Rukn al-Dawla was not prepared to compromise on that. Therefore, two basic duties of a vassal emerge: showing his subservience by giving tribute, and supporting his lord in war. The more ceremonial forms, such as names and titles on the coinage, giving and taking of gifts and robes of honour, and regular attendance at court, among others, are not on record for Ḥasanwayh. The benefits which the lord bestowed on the vassal were twofold: Ḥasanwayh was given a castle or a group of castles, possibly as *iqṭāʿ*, and he was allowed to extract resources even beyond what he had received as *iqṭāʿ*.

Ḥasanwayh therefore disposed of resources of three types: firstly, he held the family seat, the castle of Sarmāj, as freehold property, and possibly other places as well. Secondly, he held castles and districts as *iqṭāʿ*, as Rukn al-Dawla's vassal. Thirdly, he usurped control over some villages or even districts, and extorted revenue from them even though he held no legal title to that; he could do that because his lord Rukn al-Dawla let him.

Promises: Ḥasanwayh and ʿIzz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār

Būyid rule was not unified, and Rukn al-Dawla was not the only ruling member of the family. Another one was the lord of Baghdād, ʿIzz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār b. Muʿizz al-Dawla, thus Rukn al-Dawla's nephew (r. 356–67/967–78).³³

In 363–4/973–4, Turkish military slaves in Baghdād revolted against their lord ʿIzz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār. The Būyid called for help, he wrote to his uncle Rukn al-Dawla in Rayy and his cousin ʿAḍud al-Dawla (b. Rukn al-Dawla) in Fars, but both were slow in coming – perhaps they had no intention of engaging themselves in the Iraqi lowlands. In this situation, ʿIzz al-Dawla turned to others for assistance, among them Ḥasanwayh.

A letter addressed to Ḥasanwayh in this context is transmitted in the compilation made by Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābiʿ. In this letter, sent from his court at Wāsiṭ, ʿIzz al-Dawla, hard pressed by the rebellious Turks, wrote that Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Ḥasanwayh had arrived at Wāsiṭ with a group of warriors; ʿAbd al-Razzāq sped to ʿIzz al-Dawla's presence and had become one of the Būyid prince's close retainers. But more help was needed, and Ḥasanwayh was asked to provide it. The letter praises Ḥasanwayh for having been faithful to the covenants and their conditions as well as for having refrained from

33 The revolt is described and analyzed in great detail in Hachmeier, *Die Briefe*.

joining 'Izz al-Dawla's opponents. For the support which Ḥasanwayh was now asked to provide, 'Izz al-Dawla promised extended territories (stretching until Ḥulwān) which the rebel leader Sebüktegin held at that time, and tax emoluments as high as 300000 dirham per year. This sum Ḥasanwayh would be free to distribute among his retainers, in particular the tax collectors and their henchmen, and those whom he would be sending to support 'Izz al-Dawla.³⁴

The letter thus made promises in return for military support, and the promises in turn would evidently be in the form of *iqṭā'* assignments together with payments in cash, but the cash would have to be spent on the fighting force itself.

In another letter, 'Izz al-Dawla reminded Ḥasanwayh that he and the caliph had appointed him as ruler over the Kurds, and that, as a consequence, he was bound to the Baghdādī Būyid as well as the caliph by documented compacts; this implied that he had to support the Baghdādīs in military matters. The letter also hints at more promotion and favours which Ḥasanwayh would gain if he now came speedily in person to help 'Izz al-Dawla.³⁵

The second letter thus seems to posit a relationship of subservience or vassality, and it refers to formal bonds: such relations were concluded formally by documented compacts. They implied the giving and taking of robes of honour; to accept a robe of honour from a prince meant that the recipient was willing and ready to serve the giver. Honorific titles were not mentioned in this particular context. Obligations to serve included military support (*Heerfolge*), but in this particular case, moreover, and possibly as an additional incentive, the cost for the campaign were covered by the lord. In the given case, the vassal did not have to present himself at his lord's court in person, however, even if that would be preferred. Ḥasanwayh was promised extended *iqṭā'āt*; if he now acted as 'Izz al-Dawla told him, he would be 'Izz al-Dawla's *muqṭa'* as far as these lands were concerned. One of the letters also seems to imply that Ḥasanwayh was appointed over the Kurds quite as his son Badr would later be appointed by 'Aḍud al-Dawla.

34 *li-man tunfidhuhu minhum ilā ḥaḍratinā lil-khidma*. Hachmeier has "denjenigen, die Du zum Dienst an unseren Hof schickst". It is of course not stated here what *khidma* is and what kind of "service" is implied. In the Seljuq period (and possibly earlier), *khidma* is the court itself (*ḥaḍra* in the text), but also a specific set of obligations including military activity. All quotes Hachmeier, *Die Briefe*, 428–30, partial translation and comment 194–5. This letter is also discussed in Ripper, *Die Marwāniden* 52.

35 Ripper, *Die Marwāniden* 52. MS Leiden 00766, fol. 129r-131r (the quoted passages 130r-v); not in Hachmeier, *Die Briefe*, and not in the printed edition of al-Šābi', *Rasā'il*. Thanks to Jan-Just Witkam for making this passage available to me.

In addition to the three types of resources at Ḥasanwayh's disposal, a new source of revenue now appeared. Ḥasanwayh was promised new extended *iqṭā'*-holdings by another lord from the same family, 'Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār, on top of what he held from Rukn al-Dawla, what he had usurped and what he had as freehold property. The sources see no problem in holding *iqṭā'āt* from more than one lord.

'Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār continued to enjoy Ḥasanwayh's support in his further dealings with 'Aḍud al-Dawla (r. first in Fars, later in various parts of Iran and Iraq 338–372/949–983), in particular after Rukn al-Dawla died (in 366/976). At this moment, 'Aḍud al-Dawla prepared for a campaign in Iraq. One of the reasons for that campaign was that he had heard that his cousin 'Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār “sought to win over the regional and local lords such as Ḥasanwayh the Kurd.”³⁶ In his efforts to keep his allies – besides Ḥasanwayh, Bakhtiyār counted upon the “lord of the marshes”, Imrān b. Shāhīn, and Arab nobles from central Iraq – Bakhtiyār promised them appointment deeds signed by the caliph. Ḥasanwayh came last: he was to be thus honoured in case his efforts did not slacken.³⁷ Titles and robes of honour were sent to the other allies right away, but they did not dare to sport them openly for fear of 'Aḍud al-Dawla.³⁸

Two of Ḥasanwayh's sons, 'Abd al-Razzāq and Badr, had indeed joined 'Izz al-Dawla with a rather small group of warriors, but had reported to their father about the Būyid's weakness and the disorder at his camp. 'Abd al-Razzāq left 'Izz al-Dawla a bit later, but Badr stayed on until 'Aḍud al-Dawla had vanquished his cousin, had made him swear submission, and sent him off to Syria. It was only then that Badr left as well. This particular source – Hamadānī's continuation of Ṭabarī – does not state that Badr submitted to 'Aḍud al-Dawla at this point, but that is not at all impossible.³⁹ Another source reports that 'Izz al-Dawla had to confess his guilt, to accept 'Aḍud al-Dawla as his overlord and to confirm this with a solemn handclasp.⁴⁰ 'Izz al-Dawla lost because a large

36 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:671 *min istimālātī aṣḥāb al-aṭrāf ka-Ḥasanwayh al-Kurdī*.

37 Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 91–2.

38 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:376. The whole story is briefly mentioned in Busse, *Chalif und Großkönig* 47, and dated to 976.

39 Hamadānī, *Takmilā* 235. 'Izz al-Dawla had to swear to submit to 'Aḍud al-Dawla, to put his cousin's name on his flags, and to have the *khutba* held in his name wherever he went. Badr – if present at 'Izz al-Dawla's camp at that moment – would have had little choice but to submit to 'Aḍud al-Dawla as well.

40 Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 107.

number of his army left him in battle and went over to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla; we do not learn, however, how the Kurds behaved.⁴¹

Changing Alliances: Ḥasanwayh’s Sons and ‘Aḍud al-Dawla

Since Ḥasanwayh had not chosen ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s side in the first round, it is no wonder that he supported Fakhr al-Dawla (b. Rukn al-Dawla, r. in Rayy and/or Jibāl 366–87/977–97) in the following conflict. Fakhr al-Dawla had succeeded in winning Hamadān, close to Kurdish territory; relations between the two were not always undisturbed, but on the whole Ḥasanwayh can be considered to have been a follower of Fakhr al-Dawla.⁴²

Thus, Ḥasanwayh consistently allied himself to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s enemies: first to ‘Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār, later to Fakhr al-Dawla. He consequently was on the wrong side when ‘Aḍud al-Dawla turned out to be the winner in the battle for Būyid overlordship. Therefore, it is no surprise that ‘Aḍud al-Dawla started a campaign into Kurdish territory as soon as Ḥasanwayh had died in 370/980. He “hoped that the devil who had sown discord between him and his brothers and cousins had now disappeared,”⁴³ and he was determined to profit from the discord which now prevailed among Ḥasanwayh’s numerous sons. Some of them joined Fakhr al-Dawla who treated them very well,⁴⁴ some of them came to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla. Bakhtiyār b. Ḥasanwayh who had managed to get control of the main fortress Sarmāj, where the treasure was also kept, sent to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla and promised that he was willing to “come under his wings.”⁴⁵ But soon he changed his mind, and therefore ‘Aḍud al-Dawla sent a force against him. The campaign was a success, but no fighting took place: one of ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s close retainers sent messages to the enemy forces or rather their leaders, that is, the Kurdish emirs, Ḥasanwayh’s sons and their retainers as well as other followers of Fakhr al-Dawla. These men then decided that, when ‘Aḍud al-Dawla approached, they would come to his service, and ask to be integrated, and to be given *iqṭā‘āt* generously. Their changing sides was carefully negotiated, and after most of Fakhr al-Dawla’s and Ḥasanwayh’s men

41 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:671–2. See Busse, *Chalif und Großkönig* for ‘Izz al-Dawla’s ulterior fate.

42 Fragner, *Geschichte* 72.

43 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2: 414.

44 Ibn Shādi, *Mujmal* 305.

45 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2: 415, Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:706.

had gone over to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla, the castles surrendered one after the other, and the treasures were at the Būyid’s disposal.⁴⁶

Bürgel states that Badr had come to join ‘Aḍud al-Dawla earlier, during the campaign against ‘Izz al-Dawla, and had submitted to him; by various services, he had then won the Būyid prince’s favour.⁴⁷ As stated above, this is indeed probable.

Vassal: Badr b. Ḥasanwayh and ‘Aḍud al-Dawla

Ḥasanwayh had “served” Rukn al-Dawla in his wars against the Sāmānids, and that had been enough for the Būyid prince to close his eyes at the ways how Ḥasanwayh’s Kurds behaved, but we do not learn whether there was the kind of compact *‘ahd* or written document *wathīqa* between them such as there was between him and ‘Izz al-Dawla as the letters quoted above seem to imply. Such a document would also point out the “benefit” earned in service. In the case of Rukn al-Dawla and Ḥasanwayh, this “benefit” possibly included a formal *iqṭā’* relationship (although that is by no means sure), but above all the fact that he tolerated Kurdish misdeeds: the privilege which counted most for Ḥasanwayh was his freedom to rule as he saw fit.

Badr, in turn, owed everything to ‘Aḍud al-Dawla. ‘Aḍud al-Dawla had taken all the castles which had formerly belonged to Ḥasanwayh, and he was then free to appoint Badr as his vassal there – Badr was thus rewarded for having taken ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s side earlier.⁴⁸

It is worthwhile to give some details here. In a letter coming from ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s chancery, written just after the sons of Ḥasanwayh had been defeated, a number of them are called *ahl al-fasād*, wrongdoers, who tread the paths which their father had laid out; the letter names all the brothers except three, Badr, ‘Āṣim and ‘Abd al-Malik. The other brothers were imprisoned together with the leaders of their troops. “And we have ordered them to surrender Sarmāj which is the castle which Ḥasanwayh had built”, “and we have received a letter from Sarmāj granting the opening of that fortress and the handing out of what was stored there, Ḥasanwayh’s treasure and armory. [Moreover, the

46 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:415–6; Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 9 and 12. The sources use *inhāza* for changing sides and for joining someone in general; this is probably a technical term even in the 10th century, it certainly is later.

47 Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 141.

48 Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 141.

letter granted] the transfer of [property rights of?] all the [other] fortresses together with everything which was stored there, for these are the places where the Kurds prepare their misdeeds and their hiding-places,” so that from then on they would have no refuge. “And Badr b. Ḥasanwayh has hastened to our obedience and has come to our presence in Iraq, and we have made him rise to various ranks of service. He in turn has shown pure intentions and has done well, so that he has earned a right to acknowledgement and remuneration. [Therefore] we have entrusted leadership over the Barzikān Kurds to him [...] and have given him a rank in service corresponding to what the Caliph accords to men of his kind”. [...] “And we intend to raise [his brother] ‘Āṣim b. Ḥasanwayh to a position of leadership and decision-making over his followers and retainers, and we join their brother ‘Abd al-Malik in our benevolence and fostering because of his service, his obedience and his having come to our presence.”⁴⁹

This letter is revealing on many points, one of them being the rights which Ḥasanwayh (and his sons after him) had over their fortresses; they are giving up these rights now. The terms are *taslīm* (which is the normal term for surrendering a castle), but also *imtilāk*, and this term could imply a transfer of property rights. Moreover, there is an old relationship with Badr which is confirmed now, a relationship of service and benefit, *khidma* and *iḥsān*, and Badr has earned rights *istaḥaqqā* to being remunerated. This is the formula which we know from Mottahedeh’s study, and it is used here to integrate a vassal into the power networks centered on a lord.⁵⁰ At the same time, two new relations of this kind were created, between ‘Aḍud al-Dawla and two more sons of Ḥasanwayh, ‘Āṣim and ‘Abd al-Malik. ‘Āṣim received leadership over his own people – he would henceforth owe his position to this appointment which he now received from ‘Aḍud al-Dawla. This is typical: the man was allowed to continue in his old position, but not on the same basis.

In the case of ‘Abd al-Malik, we see something like a “minimal submission” which involved no more than “doing *khidma*, promising obedience, and coming to the presence of the lord.” This was enough to include ‘Abd al-Malik into the stream of benefits which ‘Aḍud al-Dawla directed at Ḥasanwayh’s sons, his *iḥsān wa l-ṣanā’a*. No particular action, no military support is mentioned, and thus, it is possible that *khidma* in this case just means some ceremony by

49 Shīrāzī 15b–16a, see also Rūdhrawārī, *Dhayl* 9 and 12, Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* 8:706 and 9:5. The term for “favouring” is *iṣṭinā’a* used for Badr (in Ibn al-Athīr) and for the group of brothers who first joined Fakhr al-Dawla (in Rūdhrawārī). See also Bürgel, *Die Hofkorrespondenz* 141, and Cahen, *Une correspondance* 87–8.

50 Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society* 27–28.

which the new retainer does obeisance to his lord.⁵¹ It is not clear what ‘Abd al-Malik got in return.

Thus, all three brothers now accepted ‘Aḍud al-Dawla as their lord so that they depended on their lord’s benefit *iḥsān* and his fostering *ṣanī’a*; but there evidently was a ranking, too, with Badr coming first, ‘Āṣim next and ‘Abd al-Malik last. This ranking was not to last; ‘Āṣim soon rebelled against Badr, and was killed together with all his brothers; Badr was then the only surviving son of Ḥasanwayh.

Comparing this to the situation one generation earlier, the relationship now had changed: Ḥasanwayh had retained his status of a local ruler, above all, his freehold castles; Badr was a dependent and remained so even if he later made a brilliant career. One source even states explicitly that ‘Aḍud al-Dawla was the reason why Badr ruled – for that, Badr owed gratitude. Badr showed that after ‘Aḍud al-Dawla had died in 372/983 by sending twenty men to Mecca every year to perform the pilgrimage on behalf of his parents and of ‘Aḍud al-Dawla.⁵² This bond of gratitude for benefit is well known from Mottahedeh’s analysis, and Badr certainly conformed to it – one could even say that he demonstrated his feeling that ‘Aḍud al-Dawla had been like a father for him.⁵³

To summarise Ḥasanwayh’s career and the beginning of Badr’s: Ḥasanwayh was a local ruler, one of many such figures in the Zagros mountains. We are not told how many men were at his command, his uncles had had several thousand each, and it seems reasonable to credit Ḥasanwayh with (at least) that much. He must have been an interesting partner in military affairs. The Būyid Rukn al-Dawla favoured him, and after a while, he got so powerful that Rukn al-Dawla was bent on curbing his influence – with not very encouraging results. The deal “military services for material rewards” is well visible in Ḥasanwayh’s relationship to ‘Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār, and it may also have been at the basis of Ḥasanwayh’s success in getting his uncle’s castles which had been taken by the Būyid army.⁵⁴ At a later stage, Ḥasanwayh took sides rather consistently with the enemies of the future winner in the intra-Būyid struggles, ‘Aḍud al-Dawla. Yet, it was only after Ḥasanwayh’s death that ‘Aḍud al-Dawla tried in earnest

51 One of the most prominent meanings of *khidma* in later sources is a ceremony which involves coming to the presence of the ruler, dismounting (often at a distance), and kissing the ground, the carpet, or the ruler’s hand or feet or stirrup. Sometimes stepping on the carpet and standing before the throne is enough; demonstrated extensively in Paul, *Khidma* 407–409.

52 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* 9: 27.

53 Mottahedeh, *Loyalty* 72–78.

54 Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajārib* 2:270.

to get control of the Kurdish regions. The way how he succeeded is telling; he used promises and material rewards to make retainers and military leaders change sides, to isolate the Ḥasanwayhid brothers, and at the end to drive a wedge between them. The final massacre was well prepared.

After his father's death and the killing of his brothers, then, Badr owed his position to an appointment by 'Aḍud al-Dawla; he no longer owned any of the castles which had been the basis of Ḥasanwayh's power. We are not told whether Badr got the Kurdish regions as *iqṭā'*, but *iqṭā'āt* evidently were conferred at least on some of the military leaders who had changed sides before.

From Freehold Castles to *Iqṭā'* Holdings?

Was there a process of turning earlier freehold castles into *iqṭā'*, if only for the moment of 'Aḍud al-Dawla's rule? And if so, how was it done? This is the question to which the last section of this contribution is devoted.

The surrender of Sarmāj and the other Kurdish castles seems to imply such a transaction. Ḥasanwayh may have received one of his uncles' castles as an *iqṭā'*. When Badr was appointed over the Barzikānī Kurds, he got (probably as an *iqṭā'*) what 'Aḍud al-Dawla had conquered before; it is said explicitly that he owed everything to his Būyid overlord. He was seen and saw himself as a dependent of his lord. Thus, men who had earlier been local lords in their own right, ruling from their freehold castles and with their military retinue of warlike nomadic Kurds, now became vassals who, even if they held the same castles and led the same men to war, were dependent on their lord, and had to conform to a set of behavioral rules: they were included in the *khidma-ni'ma*-system of service and benefit. A relation of service and reward had been in place between Ḥasanwayh and Rukn al-Dawla in a *do ut des* style; one generation later, however, it had become much tighter, more formal, and it was working much more to the advantage of the overlord.

In a collection of letters made by the famous Būyid vizier al-Šāhib b. 'Abbād,⁵⁵ we can see how another case of transfer was negotiated. In a letter sent on behalf of the Šāhib's master Mu'ayyid al-Dawla (b. Rukn al-Dawla, r. in Iṣfahān and Hamadān 366–73/977–83) to an unnamed person, this man is given an *amān*, a guarantee or safe-conduct. The terms are the following: the addressee has promised to surrender his fortress and to come to court or to another place where the transaction may be completed; in return, he is again accepted

55 On the Šāhib b. 'Abbād, see Pomerantz, Ebn 'Abbād in *Elr* online, last accessed Dec 9, 2014.

as a retainer and will receive favours (*iṣṭināʿ*) and a good *iqṭāʿ*.⁵⁶ The core of the negotiation therefore is an exchange: the addressee of the letter is to give up his fortress (which he very probably had held as freehold property) and to get an *iqṭāʿ* instead (it is not stated whether this could also be the fortress which he had held previously). It is remarkable that the bestowal of an *iqṭāʿ* is a form of *iṣṭināʿ*, “fostering”, a term which is central in Mottahedeh’s analysis. In the Ṣāḥib b. ‘Abbād’s celebrated rhymed prose, both terms are often chosen as a rhyme.

Another letter is also to the point. On behalf of an unnamed Būyid prince, possibly Bahā’ al-Dawla (b. ‘Aḍud al-Dawla, r. in various parts of western Iran and Iraq until his death in 403/1012) the writer confirmed that the prince had received a copy of the oath which the addressee had sworn. And he had sworn to surrender his castle and the village with it, on condition that he got an *iqṭāʿ* according to his wish. The letter further states that it was by necessity that the addressee took such a step, so that we can assume that he was not acting entirely out of his free will. At the end, the Ṣāḥib informs the addressee that this condition has been met: he has been given an *iqṭāʿ* and thus an increase in his *iṣṭināʿ*.⁵⁷

Iṣṭināʿ, by the way, has a slightly different meaning in the sources under study than it has in Mottahedeh’s analysis. Mottahedeh came to the conclusion that “*iṣṭināʿ* is a surprisingly formal and serious relationship”⁵⁸ which was very much a binding one, and it was used mostly as an expression for the relationship between a (former) master and his (former) slave or apprentice. In the sources under study, and with respect to the Kurds, the vocabulary of slavery does not play an important role, if it is present at all; and *iṣṭināʿ* comes across rather as another form of, or term for, “benefit”; the relationship now is between a (generous) ruler and a (grateful) subordinate. It is therefore much diluted and much less technical.

The giving of *iqṭāʿ* – control over revenues from certain districts or other sources of income as a reward for military or other service – thus was seen as a form of “fostering”, *iṣṭināʿ*. And by the same token, the giving of *iqṭāʿ* had become an instrument to include persons who earlier had been allies with a power base of their own into the power networks constructed around a great lord, in this case a ruler of ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s format. Local lords such as Badr were transformed into vassals who owed everything to their lord; Badr then could start a military and administrative career, but on another basis.

56 Ibn ‘Abbād, *Rasā’il*, chapter 3 no. 2, p. 60.

57 Ibn ‘Abbād, *Rasā’il*, chapter 6 no. 2, p. 88.

58 Mottahedeh, *Loyalty* 83.

Ḥasanwayh in turn also probably held *iqṭāʾāt* from Būyid rulers, but he would not have said that he owed everything to Rukn al-Dawla, even less to the hapless ʿIzz al-Dawla. He would not have thought that any of the Būyids was “the reason why he ruled,” and he would probably not have accepted to liken his lord to his father: all that was for Badr. In sum, Ḥasanwayh would not have felt obliged to gratitude the way in which his son evidently felt or is reported to have felt, and the reason is very simple: he must have thought of himself very much as a self-made man, powerful due to his own strength, his fortune, his shrewdness, his many sons – and the favours which his lord Rukn al-Dawla had bestowed on him were nothing but the reward which he had earned for the efforts he had spent in his lord’s service.

In other respects as well, Badr came closer to the court procedures which Mottahedeh has analysed. Ḥasanwayh is not reported to have come to court (although he may have met Rukn al-Dawla during the campaigns against the Sāmānids); Badr evidently attended various Būyid courts. Moreover, even if the relations of subservience and submission are quite clear, no one of the Kurds ever styles himself as the Būyid’s slave or bondsman; the metaphorical use of the terminology of slavery and bondage becomes common in the Seljuq period.

Conclusion

To conclude: The Ḥasanwayhid local or regional dynasty is a case where the relationship between local lords and their overlords changes. At first, the Būyid Rukn al-Dawla (no weak ruler at all), was satisfied to have Ḥasanwayh as a (junior) ally, someone who reliably took the right side in his wars with his most dangerous neighbours. For that, he let him do as he pleased in his domains – but only up to a point; beyond that, military action followed. Ḥasanwayh had supported ʿIzz al-Dawla in his conflicts with rebellious slave generals and his cousin Aḍud al-Dawla; for that he was promised control over more lands and more tax revenues. Relationships of this kind were concluded formally by compacts, perhaps in writing; ceremonial forms were involved such as the granting of titles and robes of honour. But Ḥasanwayh did not become a courtier, he was not integrated into the patrimonial household of any Būyid, neither Rukn al-Dawla nor ʿIzz al-Dawla, in the way their respective slave generals were. Even if he did receive some of his holdings on condition that he provide military service (as *iqṭāʾ*), this most probably did not apply to all of his holdings.

Things changed in the following generation. Badr b. Ḥasanwayh was under his patron’s *iṣṭināʿ*, and all his holdings were conferred on him by Aḍud al-

Dawla; Ḥasanwayh and his family had been defeated, and Badr therefore was allowed to continue as his father's heir, but thanks to 'Aḏud al-Dawla's favour which he had won earlier. Strictly speaking, he did not inherit his father's position at all, not even the family castle, Sarmāj – all that was lost because the family had taken the wrong side. His position therefore came closer to a courtly one; he was a "governor" much more than his father had been. But still, the terminology of slavery is not employed even in Badr's case. Gratitude for benefits is now the guideline, something which is not on record for Ḥasanwayh who just had to respect the compacts and other rules of governance.

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PART 2

Culture, Ethnicity, and Geography



The Emperor's Ass

*Hunting for the Asiatic Onager (Equus hemionus) in the Abbasid, Byzantine, and Carolingian Worlds**

Eric J. Goldberg

In a satirical report of his diplomatic mission to Constantinople in 968, Liudprand of Cremona inserted an account of his visit to an imperial game park.¹ Liudprand grumbled about the reserve's wild landscape and prohibition against wearing hats, but his main critique was that the Byzantine emperor, Nicephoros II Phocas, kept onagers – that is, Asiatic wild asses – in the park. Liudprand's visit to the reserve had been precipitated by an alleged conversation he had with Nicephoros during a banquet, when the Byzantine ruler had inquired whether Liudprand's lord, Emperor Otto I of Saxony, had game parks with onagers. Liudprand evidently thought hunting wild asses was ridiculous, and he sarcastically responded that the Saxon emperor kept all manner of wild animals – with the sole exception of onagers – in his parks. Nicephoros acted surprised to hear this, and he insisted that Liudprand visit his reserve and view its exotic game. But the emperor's wild asses failed to impress the dour bishop of Cremona. He recounted to Otto his visit to the game park:

There rushed toward me some onagers mingled with wild goats. But, I ask, what kind of onagers? The very same kind as are domesticated at Cremona! The same color, the same shape, the same ears, sounding the same when they begin to bray, not dissimilar in size, the same speed, and equally tasty – for wolves! When I saw them, I said to my Greek riding companion, “I never saw such animals in Saxony.” “If,” he said, “your lord will comply with the holy emperor, he will give him many of these animals, and it will be no small glory for him, when he will possess what none of his royal predecessors ever saw.”²

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1 For Liudprand's activities as diplomat at the Byzantine court, see: Mayr-Harting, Liudprand 539–56; Squatriti (trans.), *Complete works* 29–37.
2 Liudprand, *Legatio*, cc. 37–8, in Becker (ed.), *Werke* 194–5; translation modified from Squatriti (trans.), *Complete works* 260.

But Liudprand's embassy ended in failure, and Nicephoros insultingly sent Otto a pair of goats instead. Liudprand concluded by assuring Otto that he really did not want onagers anyway, since the domestic donkeys for sale in Italy were just as good and, unlike Asiatic wild asses, they would carry loads on their backs. Who but a wolf would want to eat wild ass?

Liudprand's critical attitude toward onager hunting is understandable. Although people have hunted the wild ass in Asia for millennia, the animal has never been indigenous to Europe, and it therefore was alien to a Lombard aristocrat like Liudprand. Moreover, early medieval elites had a strong sense of "noble" game – especially red deer, wild boar, bear, and aurochs – that was bound up with the skill and courage required to hunt those animals successfully.³ Onager hunting in truth was both challenging and exciting, but, for a Lombard nobleman like Liudprand, the animal looked too much like the common donkey, a working animal associated with the lower strata of society. The bishop of Cremona therefore found the idea of hunting and eating a donkey-like animal offensive and undignified, especially for an emperor.

And yet Liudprand seems to have been mistaken that none of Otto's predecessors had ever seen an Asiatic wild ass. This article examines several neglected pieces of evidence that demonstrate that the Carolingians not only took an interest in onager hunting, but also apparently introduced this foreign animal into their game parks. But the Carolingians seem not to have obtained these exotic animals from Byzantium, for which there is no evidence for onager hunting before Liudprand's report in the late 960s. Instead, the Carolingians most likely learned about onager hunting from the Muslim world. Since antiquity onagers were hunted in the semi-arid landscapes of Asia and the Middle East for sport and their surprisingly flavorsome meat, and the Umayyads and 'Abbasids embraced this ancient hunting tradition. This article examines the Muslim practice of the onager hunt and explores the circumstances under which the Carolingians took note of and apparently imported this foreign game. By investigating Carolingian interest in onagers, this article explores how hunting provided an arena for cultural and ecological exchange between Franks and Muslims in the context of Carolingian-'Abbasid diplomacy. Although separated by geography, religion, and language, Frankish and Muslim elites shared a culture of hunting that created a common social space of interaction when visiting each other's courts.

3 For hunting in early medieval Europe, see: Hennebicque, *Espaces sauvages* 35–57; Giese, *Competitive Aspekte* 263–84; Goldberg, *Louis the Pious* 1–31.

Scholarship on the history of European hunting has tended to neglect the early Middle Ages.⁴ The reason for this is that historians have tended to dismiss early medieval hunting as somehow more primitive and heroic, and less ritualized and courtly, than the hunting of the twelfth century and beyond. This alleged dichotomy between the heroic early medieval hunt and the courtly later medieval chase is a central argument of Werner Rösener's *Die Geschichte der Jagd*, which offers the best overview of the history of hunting from pre-historical times to the present.⁵ One reason Rösener believed later medieval hunting was more refined than in previous centuries was the crusades, which brought Europe's elites in contact with the sophisticated hunting and falconry traditions of the Muslim world.⁶ Yet Rösener's characterization of the early Middle Ages is problematic. Not only did a highly developed hunting culture already exist by the Carolingian era, but, as the strange travels of the Asiatic onager demonstrate, Muslim hunting also made an impression on the Carolingians centuries before the crusades. Ultimately, Carolingian hunting needs to be studied on its own terms and not simply as a prelude to later eras.

The onager or Asiatic wild ass (*Equus hemionus*) is a species of the genus *Equus* of the family Equidae (horse).⁷ (Figure 1) It is distinct from the African wild ass (*Equus africanus*) and the domesticated donkey (*Equus asinus*).⁸ In Antiquity the onager had a broad habitat in Asia and the Middle East spanning from Egypt to Mongolia.⁹ In modern times, however, human settlement, poaching, and competition with livestock have drastically reduced onager herds and pushed them into scattered marginal locations. Taxonomists divide onagers into five geographic subspecies, four of which are now endangered and one extinct: the Indian khur (*Equus hemionus khur*), the Mongolian wild ass or kulan (*Equus hemionus hemionus*), the Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan kulan (*Equus hemionus kulan*), the Persian onager (*Equus hemionus onager*), and the now-extinct Syrian wild ass (*Equus hemionus hemippus*).¹⁰ The onager

4 For example, see the following works that focus predominantly on the later Middle Ages: Cummins, *Hound*; Rösener (ed.), *Jagd*; Martini (ed.), *Jagd*; Almond, *Medieval hunting*; Oggins, *Kings*; Allsen, *Royal hunt*. But now see Grimm and Schmölcke (eds.), *Hunting*.

5 Rösener, *Geschichte*, esp. 12, 99, 109, 128, 132–4, 138, 147–8, 151–3.

6 *Ibid.* 144, 151–4, 156, 161.

7 Concerning onagers, see: Feh et al., Status 62–71; Geigl and Grange, Eurasian 1–15. I would like to thank Dr. Petra Kaczensky of the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, for advising me on the biology and ecology of the onager.

8 The African wild ass is the closest ancestor of the domesticated donkey: Beja-Pereira et al., African origins 1781.

9 Feh et al., Status 62–5 and fig. 5.1.

10 *Ibid.*, 64; Kaczensky et al., Connectivity 920–9.

typically weighs 440–575 pounds, measures six to eight feet long, and has a life span of 20–30 years. Its coat varies according to season, from reddish-brown in the summer to light brown in the winter, with white on its belly, buttocks, and muzzle and a distinctive black or brown stripe down the spine. Onagers live in highly mobile groups and herds on the steppes, semi-deserts, and deserts of Asia, where they graze on grass, shrubs, and trees.¹¹ The animal possesses impressive speed and stamina, having been measured running over 40 miles per hour – that is, about the maximum speed of a thoroughbred race-horse. As Liudprand intimated, the onager is notoriously wild and unbiddable, and humans therefore have never domesticated it as a work animal.

Humans have hunted the Asiatic wild ass since prehistoric times. Alongside the gazelle, the onager was the chief source of game for Mesolithic cultures east of the Caspian Sea for millennia.¹² In Antiquity, huntsmen in Asia prized the onager for its remarkable speed, fierce strength, and surprisingly succulent meat. The Hebrew Scriptures praise the onager for its swiftness and hardihood and its ability to survive in harsh, dry environments.¹³ Near eastern rulers prized the onager as royal game. The stone reliefs from the north palace at Nineveh depict the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–27 BC) in his park hunting lions, gazelles, and onagers.¹⁴ To make up for the onager's speed and endurance, hunters traditionally relied on relays of horses. The Greek historian Xenophon (d. 354 BC) gave a brief account of onager hunting along the upper Euphrates. He wrote:

Trees there were none, but wild animals of all sorts, vast numbers of wild asses and many ostriches, besides bustards and gazelles. These animals were sometimes chased by the horsemen. As for the asses, whenever one chased them, they would run on ahead and stop – for they ran much faster than the horses – and then, when the horses came near, they would do the same thing again, and it was impossible to catch them unless the horsemen posted themselves at intervals and hunted them in relays. The flesh of those that were captured was like venison, but more tender.¹⁵

11 For a five-year study of the travels of seven Asiatic wild asses in south-western Mongolia, see Kaczensky et al., Resource selection 1762–9.

12 Allsen, *Royal hunt* 110–2.

13 Genesis 16:12; Job 6:5, 11:12, 24:5, 39: 5–6; Psalm 104:11; Isaiah 32:14; Jeremiah 2:24, 14:6, 48:6; Daniel 5:21; Hosea 8:9; Sirach 13:19.

14 Pedde, Assyrian heartland, 851–66 at 865.

15 Xenophon, *Anabasis* 287 (1.5).

Under the British empire, traveling English sportsmen occasionally hunted onagers, employing essentially the same techniques described by Xenophon.¹⁶ Onager remained a delicacy in Turkmenistan, Iran, and Syria into the nineteenth century. Although onager populations are now protected everywhere, poaching remains a serious threat. This illegal hunting, along with the loss of habitat to human development and livestock, explain why the onager is endangered today.¹⁷

The Romans imported Asiatic wild asses into their empire, but for reasons of habitat they seem to have been rare outside the eastern provinces.¹⁸ In his *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder highlighted the strong sex drive of male onagers, and he propagated the myth that adult males tried to bite off the testicles of masculine offspring to prevent rivals within their harems.¹⁹ The Romans seem chiefly to have imported onagers for the amphitheater or breeding. Martial, who praised the animal's beauty, alluded to onager hunts before cheering crowds of toga-clad spectators.²⁰ Mosaics from North Africa depict lions and tigers attacking wild asses, perhaps recalling animal fights in the arena.²¹ Pliny the Elder and Columella stressed the potential advantages of breeding male onagers with female domestic asses to enhance the offspring's strength as draft animals, although Columella cautioned that it took several generations to breed out the onager's wild, indomitable disposition from its descendants.²² Although Virgil makes a passing reference to an onager hunt in his *Georgics*,²³ hunting wild ass seems to have been rare in the western provinces of the empire, and neither Pliny nor Columella listed onagers among the game Romans commonly kept in their private parks (hares, deer, wild boar,

16 In 1892, a certain Captain H.L. Nutt of the British Bombay Staff Corps participated in an onager hunt in northwest India that entailed 51 huntsmen and the use of remounts. The chase lasted three hours, covered forty miles, and resulted in the capture of a single young female that was sent to the London Zoological Society: Nutt, Donkey hunting 276–80.

17 Feh et al., Status 67–8.

18 Varro (d. 27 BC) reported that there were abundant herds in Phrygia and Lycaonia in central Asia Minor, and the Greek geographer Strabo stated that the Scythians and Sarmatians hunted onagers on the great steppes north of the Black Sea: Varro, *On agriculture* 378–81 (II.6.3); Strabo, *Geography* iii, 248–9 (VII.4.8).

19 Pliny, *Natural history* iii, 78–9, 118–23 (VIII.44, 46, 68–9). Pliny conflated the Asiatic onager with the African wild ass, although the two animals are separate species. For onager reproductive behavior, see Feh et al., Status 65–6.

20 Martial, *Epigrams* ii, 212–3 (XIII.100).

21 Abed, *Tunisian mosaics* 120–1 and fig. 6.10.

22 Pliny, *Natural history* iii, 122–3 (VIII.69); Columella, *On agriculture* ii, 217–9 (VI.37); Varro, *On agriculture* 378–81 (II.6.3).

23 Virgil, *Georgics*, 204 (III.409–13).

and oryx).²⁴ There is no evidence for onagers in the post-Roman West before the Carolingians, and the animal was remembered only through classical literature and the Bible. The Merovingian poet Venantius Fortunatus (d. ca.600), for example, consciously echoed Virgil's *Georgics* by referring to the onager in a classicizing poem to the Frankish magnate Gogo.²⁵ Isidore of Seville (d. 636) borrowed his entry on the onager from Pliny the Elder.²⁶ The Greek bestiary known as the *Physiologus*, which was translated into Latin in Late Antiquity, contains only a brief entry for the onager based on Pliny and the Book of Job.²⁷

It was the Muslim caliphs and Arab and Persian elites who inherited the ancient Sasanian and Near Eastern traditions of the onager hunt.²⁸ The Muslims used fast, long-eared sight-hounds known as Salukis, and sometimes also trained cheetahs, to hunt gazelles, oryx, hares, as well as onagers.²⁹ From the Umayyad and 'Abbasid eras there is a rich corpus of *tardiyyat* or Arabic hunting poems that sing the praises of Salukis, falcons, and cheetahs and their exploits in the chase.³⁰ The 'Abbasid chronicler al-Tabari (d. 923) included a large number of hunting anecdotes in his massive *History of Prophets and Kings*.³¹

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- 24 Pliny, *Natural history* iii, 146–7 (viii.78); Columella, *On agriculture* ii, 421–7 (ix.1). On the other hand, Ammianus Marcellinus, *History* i, 329 (xiii.4.7), who hailed from Syria where wild asses lived in the wild, did refer to onager hunting.
 - 25 Venantius, *Carmina* 155–6 (vii.4, lines 17–22). Concerning the poem and its recipient, see: Roberts, *Humblest sparrow* 77–8, 252–3, 257–60; George, *Venantius* 136–40; George (trans.), *Venantius* 57–8, 126.
 - 26 Isidore, *Etymologiarum* ii (xii.1.4, 71.1.39).
 - 27 Carmody (ed.), *Physiologus* 95–134; Curley (trans.), *Physiologus* 15 (c.11). For another post-Roman author who referred to the onager, see Prinz (ed.), *Kosmographie* 165–6.
 - 28 For overviews of the Umayyads and 'Abbasids, see Robinson (ed.), *New Cambridge history* i, especially: Cobb, *Empire* 226–68; el-Hibri, *Empire* 269–304; Bonner, *Waning* 305–59.
 - 29 For hunting and falconry in the medieval Islamic world, see: Stetkevych, *Hunt*; Hassan, *Hunting*; Möller, *Studien*; Allen and Smith, *Some notes* 104–47; Smith, *Arabian hound* 459–64; Allen, *Falconry*. The Muslim elites inherited much of their hunting culture from the Persians: Wiesehöfer, *Late Sasanian* 114, 125–6.
 - 30 Smith, *Hunting poetry* 167–84.
 - 31 Al-Tabari, *History* i, 345 (mythological origins of hunting); xiii, 7 (slaying of a lion); xiv, 40–1 (emir's austringer); xv, 231 (hunting gazelles); xix, 198 (Yazid I criticized for keeping dogs); xxvi, 88–9 (al-Walid brings dogs on pilgrimage); xxix, 94 (al-Mansur forbids amusements at court), 101 (al-Mansur deposes a governor for excessive hunting), 243 (al-Mahdi dies while hunting gazelles); xxx, 324 (Harun al-Rashid hunts); xxxi, 225–8 (Muhammad al-Amin collects wild animals and birds); xxxiii, 79–81 (a nobleman goes hawking); xxxv, 121 (hawks as tribute); xxxvi, 24 (al-Muhtadi rids the court of lions, dogs, and entertainments); xxxviii, 77 (falcons as tribute). For al-Tabari and his context, see al-Tabari, *History* i, 5–147; Bonner, *Waning* 307.

and the 'Abbasid court also witnessed the first golden age of Arabic manuals on falconry.³² Caliphs spent vast sums of money on the construction of game reserves and gardens. Al-Tabari reported that Harun al-Rashid's father al-Mahdi (775–85) spent fifty million dirhams on a single pleasure park, while Harun al-Rashid's son al-Amin (809–13) constructed numerous "villas and palaces of retreat, amusement, and sport" where he assembled entertainers, horses, wild animals, lions, and birds.³³ According to Hilal al-Sabi (d. 1056), a chronicler of the early 'Abbasid court who based his information on now-lost sources, the animal menagerie in Baghdad contained several elephants and one hundred lions.³⁴ Al-Mu'tasim (833–42) and his successors built a new capital 60 miles north of Baghdad at Samarra with sprawling palace complexes that included several game reserves with gazelles, deer, hares, ostriches, and onagers.³⁵ To give a sense of scale of one of these hunting reserves, the walled game park adjacent the 'Abbasid hunting palace at al-Musharrahahat (southeast of Samarra) measured 5.7 × 3.8 miles, enclosed approximately 13,862 acres, and contained an artificial river and lake.³⁶

The Umayyads and 'Abbasids associated wild asses with physical strength, masculine virility, and sexual prowess. Al-Tabari several times invoked the crude Arabic proverb, "He who fucks a wild ass fucks an expert fucker," meaning something like, "He who bites off more than he can chew gets what he deserves."³⁷ Early in his *History*, al-Tabari established the onager as royal game in his idealized portrait of the great Sasanian ruler, Bahram v Gur ("the Wild Ass," 420–38). He described the young prince as the "most outstanding of men in rulership and nobility," having received a first-rate education from "a group of scholars from the Persians versed in law, instructors in archery and the equestrian arts, and teachers in writing and in all the share of attainments

32 Möller, *Studien* 29–32, 107–9.

33 Al-Tabari, *History* xxix, 227; xxxi, 225–8. When al-Muhtadi (869–70) sought to purify the 'Abbasid court, he ordered that "all the lions that were in the caliphal palace be killed, that the dogs be cast out, and that all frivolous entertainments cease": al-Tabari, *History* xxxvi, 24.

34 Kennedy, *When Baghdad* 152–4.

35 El-Hibri, *Empire* 298; Littlewood, *Gardens* 37n.169; Northedge, *Palaces* 29–67, esp. 53–5, 62–3.

36 Northedge, *Palaces* 54–5 and figs. 12–3.

37 Al-Tabari, *History* xxii, 52; xxxii, 327. In one story, an assassin's dagger was repeatedly cooled in onager milk while being forged: al-Tabari, *History* xxii, 198.

of those possessing a good education.”³⁸ Al-Tabari was the first to record a famous story about Bahram’s hunting exploits. One day while riding, he saw a lion pounce on an onager, and he slew both animals with a single bowshot. The prince was so proud of the feat that he ordered this scene to be painted on the wall of his palace, thereby earning his sobriquet. Al-Tabari reported that the last Umayyad caliph Marwan II (744–50) likewise had the nickname “the Wild Ass” (“al-Himar”), apparently in imitation of Bahram Gur. According to al-Tabari, while Marwan II was laying siege to a town in Abyssinia, one of the defenders mocked him from atop the walls by dangling a large onager penis from his own member and shouting down, “Here is your banner!” Marwan did not forget the insult. When he captured the town, he ordered the offender’s penis (and nose) to be removed.³⁹

Another testament to the Arab passion for onager hunting is the palace of Qasr ‘Amra in Jordan, which may have been the desert retreat of the future Umayyad caliph al-Walid II (743–44).⁴⁰ The surviving frescos of Qasr ‘Amra contain vivid depictions of onager hunting among the other pleasures of court life (bathing, music, dancing women, tribute from foreign rulers). The Qasr ‘Amra artists depicted a number of hunting scenes with onagers in the east hall of the palace. In one scene, a lion pounces on an onager, while nearby a servant releases a pack of Salukis on a herd of wild asses.⁴¹ On the upper zone of the western wall is the largest and most impressive hunting scene measuring 55 feet long. In it, three mounted hunters drive a herd of onagers along a corridor of ropes (“scares”) held up by servants bearing torches and spears. At the end of the corridor the animals are herded into a circular paddock bounded by large nets, where six hunters armed with spears and swords butcher them.⁴² One especially prominent huntsman with a beard and blue tunic thrusts his spear into the breast of a rearing onager, and it has been suggested that this may be a depiction of the Umayyad prince himself.⁴³ Nearby is another scene depicting the sequel to the hunt: in a clearing servants slit the throats of the onagers and disembowel them in preparation for an upcoming banquet.

38 Al-Tabari, *History* v, 84–6. See further Yarshater (ed.), *Encyclopædia Iranica* iii, 518–9 (entries for “Bahram Gur”).

39 Al-Tabari, *History* xxvii, 23.

40 Fowden, *Qusayr ‘Amra*; Cobb, *Empire* 246–7, 250–1.

41 Fowden, *Qusayr ‘Amra* 91–3.

42 For a similar modern technique to capture onagers for scientific study, see Levanov, Sokolov, and Kaczensky, *Corral* 325–34.

43 Fowden, *Qusayr ‘Amra* 99–102.

Like the Muslim caliphs, the Byzantine emperors continued traditions of hunting they inherited from Antiquity. Chroniclers report the hunting exploits (and injuries) of several east Roman rulers,⁴⁴ and artists depicted emperors hunting as well.⁴⁵ Byzantine soldiers were encouraged to hunt as a form of military training.⁴⁶ However, there is no evidence that onagers were imported into Byzantine game parks before the tenth century.⁴⁷ As we have seen, Nicephoros II Phocas had wild asses by the time Liudprand made his visit to Constantinople in 968. But Liudprand is our earliest source for the hunting of wild asses at the Byzantine court. If we trust Liudprand's account, then we might conclude from Nicephoros's peculiar eagerness to show off his onagers that he had acquired them only recently. Here the political context may be significant. In the years immediately before Liudprand's visit, Nicephoros waged a series of remarkably successful conquests beyond the Tarsus frontier into Cilicia, the emirate of Aleppo, and Syria, culminating with the capture of Antioch in 969.⁴⁸ These were all regions under Muslim rule where onagers lived in the wild. It is therefore possible that Nicephoros brought wild asses back to Constantinople from these campaigns as a symbol of his recent conquests of Muslim territory. This would explain why Nicephoros wanted to show his onagers, and not some other animal, to Otto's ambassador. It is noteworthy that Liudprand himself saw the wild ass as a symbol of the Muslim world.⁴⁹ After Liudprand we have no more reports of east Roman emperors hunting wild ass, which may indicate this Byzantine importation from Asia was short-lived.⁵⁰

When we shift our attention to western Europe, we find a surprising cluster of references to onagers in Carolingian sources. To be sure, classical literature and the Bible inspired occasional mentions of the Asiatic wild ass by

44 Norwich, *Short History* 47 (Theodosius II), 157–8 (Basil I), 272 (John II Comnenos); Liudprand, *Antapodosis* 111.25, in Becker (ed.), *Werke* 83–5 (Romanos I); Talbot and Sullivan (trans.), *History* 83 (Romanos II); Magoulias (trans.), *O city* 23–4 (John II Comnenos); Brand (trans.), *Deeds* 27, 76, 144, 200 (Manuel I Comnenos).

45 Grabar, *L'empereur* 57–62, 133–44.

46 Dennis (trans.), *Maurice's Strategikon* 165–9.

47 Thanks to John Haldon for advice on this matter (personal correspondence). On Byzantine game parks, see Littlewood, *Gardens* 13–38, esp. 35–8; Ševčenko, *Wild animals* 1–19.

48 Ostrogorsky, *History* 284–5, 288–91.

49 See his report of the prophesy of a Sicilian bishop following his account of the imperial game park: Liudprand, *Legatio*, cc. 40–41, ed. Becker (ed.), *Werke* 196–198.

50 Gaglik I of Armenia (989–1020) likewise had wild asses in his game park on the Araxes River: Thomas Artsruni, *History* 316 (111.29). In the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela saw onagers and other beasts in the Hippodrome in Constantinople: Signer, Adler, and Asher (trans.), *Itinerary* 70–1.

Carolingian writers.⁵¹ However, in the middle decades of the ninth century, we find an intriguing constellation of references to onagers that suggests growing Carolingian knowledge about this foreign animal, not from classical literature or the Bible, but from contact with the Muslim world. The earliest of these references comes from the pen of Louis the Pious's anonymous biographer, known as the "Astronomer," who wrote his *Life of Emperor Louis* in 840/1.⁵² When describing a failed Frankish surprise attack against the Muslim-held Spanish city of Tortosa in 809, the Astronomer memorably reported that a Moor spotted dung from Frankish horses floating down the Ebro River and thus uncovered the immanent assault. It was here that the Astronomer made an unexpected reference to onagers. He wrote:

A certain Moor entered the river to bathe and saw horse dung borne along by the river. Having seen it, for these are cunning people, he swam out, grabbed the dung, held it to his nose, and shouted, "Look," he said, "O comrades. I warn you to watch out. This dung is not from an onager or from any animal that feeds on pasture grass. To be sure, these are horse droppings that were certainly barley once upon a time and therefore the fodder of horses or mules. So be on the lookout because further up the river, it seems to me, an ambush is being prepared for us."⁵³

The Astronomer's account is undoubtedly apocryphal, since he could not have known the words of a Moorish bather (presumably spoken in Arabic) more than three decades before he wrote. Moreover, onagers have never been indigenous to Spain, and it therefore is highly unlikely that they lived in the wild along the Ebro River in the ninth century. Nevertheless, the anecdote is significant because it demonstrates that the Astronomer associated the onager, not with classical literature or the Bible, but with the Muslim world. In this passage the Astronomer clearly wanted to relate an exciting story about the Frankish-Muslim frontier, and he inserted the (geographically misplaced) detail about the onager apparently to create a sense of dramatic verisimilitude.

51 For example, see: *Miconis opus prosodiacum*, in Traub (ed.), MGH Poetae iii, 289 (echoing Martial); *Versus de carminis impeditione causa thematis tropologice*, in von Winterfeld (ed.), MGH Poetae iv, 244; Hincmar, *Opusculum LV capitulorum*, c. 46, in Schieffer (ed.), *Streitschriften* 327 (echoing Job).

52 On the Astronomer, see: Astronomer, *Vita* 53–152; de Jong, *Penitential state* 70–89; Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne* 219–26.

53 Astronomer, *Vita* 328–9 (c.15); Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne* 240.

Other details suggest that the Astronomer possessed some knowledge about the Muslim tradition of hunting onagers. In particular, his description of the Moor sniffing animal dung deserves attention, since it is unique in early medieval Latin literature. The image might seem humorous to us (“fimumque comprehendens et naribus admovens”), but the Astronomer offered that detail as proof of the Moors’ great intelligence (“sunt nimiae calliditatis”). Here the Astronomer in fact described a skill that was essential to hunting. Before hunting parties set off, trackers were often sent out to locate the best game, a stage of the hunt known as “the quest” in late medieval hunting manuals.⁵⁴ In his description of the different kinds of hunters, Isidore of Seville labeled such trackers “vestigatores,” while Hincmar seems to have called them “bersarii” (“stalkers”).⁵⁵ Often with the help of scent dogs, trackers searched for and interpreted animal tracks, beds, scratchings on trees, and especially droppings. The careful examination of scat revealed to the tracker’s trained eye and nose the animal’s species, size, age, diet, and health. Indeed, it was not uncommon for trackers to bring samples of the droppings back to the hunting party so they could decide which animal to pursue.⁵⁶ Onagers tend to graze on wild grass and stay relatively close to water,⁵⁷ so the Astronomer’s description of a Moor examining droppings in a river to see if they came from a grass-eating beast (“animans herbidis assuetum pastibus”) is an accurate description of how one would track wild asses in their natural habitat. In short, this passage suggests that the Astronomer knew about onagers, associated them within the Muslim world, and had heard how a skilled hunter might track them. Hunting is a major theme that runs throughout the Astronomer’s *Life of Emperor Louis*,⁵⁸ and his court audience (which undoubtedly included lay nobles) probably would have recognized this allusion to tracking game.

A contemporary of the Astronomer likewise made an unusual reference to onagers: the learned abbot of Fulda and later archbishop of Mainz, Rabanus Maurus. In his *On the Natures of Things* (*De rerum naturis*), Rabanus included

54 Cummins, *Hound* 33–5.

55 Isidore, *Etymologiarum* i (x.282); Hincmar, *De ordine palatii*, c. 17, in Boretius and Krause (eds.), MGH Capitularia ii, 523. Hincmar’s is the earliest example of the Latinized Frankish word “bersarius,” which makes it difficult to define precisely. It is related to the modern German “pirschen,” meaning “to stalk” or “to hunt.” Hincmar contrasted this figure to the chief huntsmen and falconers at court and lumped him together with two other lesser hunting servants, the keepers of the dogs (“veltrarii”) and beaver trappers (“beverarii”): Niermeyer and van de Kieft, *Mediae* i, 128–9 (s. v. “bersare,” “bersarius”).

56 Cummins, *Hound* 35–7 and fig. 3.

57 Feh et al., Status 65.

58 Goldberg, Louis 23–6.

an entry on onagers in his chapter on animals.⁵⁹ Rabanus composed this massive 22-volume theological encyclopedia in the mid-840s, and he sent a copy of it to Louis the Pious's son and namesake Louis the German.⁶⁰ In his entry on onagers, Rabanus began by quoting Isidore of Seville's information on the subject, which in turn largely derived from Pliny's *Natural History*: "Onager means wild ass. For Greeks call an ass ὄνον, and the word for wild is ἄγριον. Africa has large untamed ones that wander the deserts. A single male governs a flock of females. They are jealous of newborn males and bite off their testicles. Fearing this, their mothers therefore hide them away in secret locations."⁶¹ As usual, Rabanus then drew on commentaries of the Church Fathers to survey possible allegorical meanings of onagers in Scripture.⁶²

In the middle of his discussion, however, Rabanus inserted some brief comments about onagers that appear to be based on independent information and personal knowledge. He wrote, "The onager is a wild ass, which is said to have the most succulent heart of all animals. As passive as the breed is when subdued, it becomes extremely fierce again when taken out of woodland reserves."⁶³ Rabanus's words here, which appear to have no classical or patristic source,⁶⁴ are noteworthy for several reasons. To begin, his comment that the onager "is said to have the most succulent heart ("cor pinguisimum") of all animals" suggests that he had heard about the animal's reputation for having especially tender meat.⁶⁵ Even more curious is his comment about the behavior of onagers in captivity, describing them as passive when subdued ("patiens est domitum") but becoming "extremely fierce again when taken out of woodland reserves" ("tantum saevissimum redditur, cum silvis retinentibus efferatur"). Here Rabanus employed the phrase "silvae retinentes" to indicate wooded properties set aside to hold wild animals – in other words, game

59 Rabanus, *De rerum* 212D–213C (VII.8); Rabanus, *De universo* i, 227–8.

60 Rabanus, *Epistolae*, no. 36, in Dümmler (ed.), *MGH Epistolae* v, 472–3. Dümmler dated Rabanus's dedicatory letter to Louis the German ca.842–6.

61 Isidore, *Etymologiarum* ii (XII.1.39).

62 Focusing on Psalm 103:11, Job 39: 5–6, and Jeremiah 2:24, 14:6, Rabanus variously interpreted wild asses to signify stubborn Jews, Jewish leaders, holy people, or the proud.

63 Rabanus, *De rerum* 213A (VII.8).

64 Rabanus does not draw his words from Gregory the Great's *Moralia* (e.g., 30.50), Augustine's *Commentaries on the Psalms*, Isidore's *Etymologies*, or any other patristic source I could identify.

65 Notker suggests that hunters prized the hearts of hunted game, perhaps because they were believed to hold the animal's life force: Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 61 (11.8).

parks.⁶⁶ As we have seen, onagers traditionally were hunted in open terrain over vast distances. Since the thrill of hunting onagers arose from the long and arduous pursuit, it is understandable that the excitement was diminished in a walled game park, where the wild ass could not display its great speed and endurance. This would explain why Rabanus contrasted the animal's behavior in captivity and in the wild.

How did the Astronomer and Rabanus learn these details about onagers not found in classical authors or the Bible? The most likely explanation is that they had heard this information in circles around the royal court, where the Carolingians were in diplomatic contact with the 'Abbasid caliphs.⁶⁷ As Michael McCormick has emphasized, the first Carolingian king Pippin III inaugurated a new era of Frankish diplomacy by sending envoys to Baghdad in 765 to form an alliance with the second 'Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur (754–75), probably against their common enemies, the Umayyad emirs of Spain.⁶⁸ Three years later, Pippin's envoys returned to Francia escorting Muslim ambassadors sent by the caliph. The elderly Pippin received these unusual guests in Aquitaine in 768, where they exchanged gifts and solidified the new alliance.⁶⁹ Three decades later Charlemagne reinitiated this diplomacy with the 'Abbasids, exchanging multiple embassies and gifts with Harun al-Rashid (786–809) during the years 797–807.⁷⁰ Charlemagne's treaty with Harun al-Rashid was probably directed not only against the Umayyad emirate in Spain, but also against their second common adversary, the Byzantine empire. This alliance also created circumstances that enabled Charlemagne to patronize churches and Christian communities in and around Jerusalem.⁷¹ Louis the Pious likewise

66 Rabanus employed the active participle *retinens* to describe man-made devices like reins and nets that restrained wild animals: Rabanus, *De rerum* 556D, 614A (xx.43, xxii.16). In the early medieval West, a range of new words emerged from the verb *retinere* to denote lands set aside for special use: Niermeyer and van de Kieft, *Mediae* ii, 1196–7 (s. v. “reten-tatio,” “retentus,” “retinementum,” “retinentia.”) Rabanus never employed the Roman or Carolingian terms for game park (*vivarium*, *brogilus*).

67 For relations between the Carolingians and the 'Abbasids, see: Buckler, *Harunu'l-Rashid*; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch*; Sénac, *Monde* 43–70; Drews, *Karolinger*. For Muslim Spain, see Sénac, *Carolingiens*.

68 McCormick, *Origins*, Appendix 4, nos. 169, 174, 175, 177; McCormick, Pippin 221–41; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 34–45.

69 Wallace-Hadrill (trans.), *Continuation* 118–9 (c.51).

70 Einhard, *Vita Karoli* 19 (c.16); McCormick, *Origins*, Appendix 4, nos. 238, 254, 261, 271, 277; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 45–107. For Harun al-Rashid's reign, see El-Hibri, *Empire* 380–4.

71 Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch*, 92–101, 121; McCormick, *Charlemagne's survey*.

received ambassadors from Harun al-Rashid's son al-Ma'mun (813–33) and established a peace treaty ("pax") with him during an assembly at Thionville in 831.⁷² While Pippin, Charlemagne, and Louis the Pious presumably saw these treaties with the 'Abbasids as alliances between equals, the caliphs, as the Leaders of the Faithful and Successors to the Prophet of God, may have viewed the distant Frankish kings as subordinate vassals on the margins of their world empire.⁷³

Be that as it may, the repeated exchange of ambassadors and gifts between Carolingians and 'Abbasids brought the Carolingians and the Franks into direct contact with the sophisticated hunting culture of the Muslim world. During such diplomatic visits, which could last months or even years,⁷⁴ Franks, Arabs, and Persians had the opportunity to learn about each other's hunting traditions, whether through conversations (using translators) around the banqueting table or by going hunting together. Ermoldus Nigellus and Notker the Stammerer support this picture of elite sociability around the chase and banquet, since both authors describe Franks, Muslims, and other foreigners hunting and dining together when visiting each other's courts.⁷⁵ It would have been only natural for Carolingian and 'Abbasid ambassadors to be curious about each other's hunting traditions, since a love of the chase was one activity they shared as elites.⁷⁶ From a practical point of view, moreover, Islamic dietary laws made it necessary for Muslim ambassadors (or at least their servants) to prepare their own meat when visiting Francia. The Franks' beloved pork of course was off limits to Muslims, while a Muslim had to invoke the name of Allah before butchering other types of animals for it to be *halal*. If hungry for wild game, the Muslim hunter needed to invoke the name of Allah before

72 McCormick, *Origins*, Appendix 4, no. 420; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 111–3. For Louis the Pious's relations with Muslim Spain, see Conant, Louis 336–60.

73 Buckler, *Harunu'l-Rashid* 30–5.

74 McCormick, *Origins* 470–4.

75 Ermoldus, *In honorem* 156–80 (lines 2062–359: Franks and Danes eating and hunting together); Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 54–5 (11.6: Franks eating with the Byzantine emperor), 59–65 (11. 8–9: Franks and Muslims hunting together).

76 Al-Tabari's depiction of Bahram V Gur as a model prince (well educated, learned in law, a skilled archer and equestrian, and a master huntsman) parallels the descriptions of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious by Einhard and Thegan: al-Tabari, *History* v, 84–6; Einhard, *Vita Karoli* 23 (c.19); Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici* 200–5 (c.19). For the courtly manners and hunting of the late Sasanian elite and their adoption by the 'Abbasids, see: Wiesehöfer, Late Sasanian 125–6; El-Hibri, Empire 280–2, 289, 298, 301; Cobb, Empire 249–53. For the Carolingian nobility, see: Airlie, Aristocracy 431–50; Airlie, Charlemagne 90–102; Stone, *Morality* 21–6, 116–34, 214–46.

releasing his dogs.⁷⁷ The Hadith specifically permitted Muslims to eat onager, even though the consumption of domestic donkey was prohibited.⁷⁸

In this context, there is good reason to think that courtiers like the Astronomer and Rabanus would have learned about eastern traditions of onager hunting through the exchange of Frankish and Muslim envoys. Frankish ambassadors (and the members of their large entourages⁷⁹) who made the trip to the 'Abbasid court, as well as Arab and Persian envoys who traveled to Francia, must have related memorable tales about the magnificent 'Abbasid game parks around Baghdad and the hunting and eating of unfamiliar game like the onager. As prominent figures around the Carolingian court, both the Astronomer and Rabanus must have learned considerable information about Arab and Persian culture. Indeed, it is likely that the Astronomer and Rabanus were present at the Thionville assembly in the autumn of 831 at which Louis the Pious received al-Ma'mun's ambassadors. The Astronomer's account of the 'Abbasid embassy of 831 is much more detailed than the report in the *Annals of St.-Bertin*, adding that al-Ma'mun's envoys were two Muslims and a Christian and that they brought Louis "great gifts from their homeland, that is, diverse kinds of perfumes and textiles."⁸⁰ Rabanus was at court a few months earlier when he received a grant from the emperor,⁸¹ and in his *In Praise of the Holy Cross* he marveled how the 'Abbasids sent Louis the Pious precious gifts.⁸² Carolingian artists had a good sense of what onagers looked like. The Stuttgart and Utrecht Psalters, which were produced during Louis the Pious's reign, both contain depictions of onagers to illustrate Psalm 104.11 (Vulgate 103.11): "All the

77 Q 5:4; Allen and Smith, Some notes 114–5.

78 Ruska, Himar.

79 McCormick, *Origins* 162, 226, estimates that the entourages of high-ranking ambassadors to foreign courts numbered at least several dozen people. Thus, even when the leaders of an embassy perished (as happened to Charlemagne's ambassadors Lantfrid and Sigmund during their trip to Harun's court in 797–801), a significant number of their companions presumably would have returned. For the identities of Carolingian ambassadors to the 'Abbasids, see Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 124–5.

80 Grat, Vielliard, and Clémencet (eds.), *Annales* 4 (s.a. 831); Astronomer, *Vita Hludowici* 466–7 (c.46) and nn. 675–6; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 111–3.

81 Rabanus received a grant from Louis the Pious at Ingelheim on June 8, 831: Böhmer and Mühlbacher, *Regesta* i, 353 (no. 891).

82 Rabanus, *In laudibus* 143B; Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 113; Astronomer, *Vita Hludowici* 467n.676.

beasts of the field will drink, the onager will quench its thirst.”⁸³ (Figures 2 and 3)

The Astronomer’s reference to textiles among al-Ma’mun’s gifts suggests an additional avenue through which the Franks could have learned about eastern traditions of onager hunting. Valuable eastern textiles and silks were common among the gifts the ‘Abbasids sent the Carolingians.⁸⁴ European museums and treasuries today contain a significant number of early medieval silks imported from workshops in the East – Egypt, Syria, Persia, Constantinople, and elsewhere – that imitate traditional Sasanian styles.⁸⁵ A number of these eastern silks (including beautiful examples in Prague, Cologne, Milan, and Le Mans) display the famous scene of the Persian king Bahram Gur slaying the lion and onager with a bowshot. Ninth-century Carolingian elites clearly admired these silks with the Bahram Gur motif: the silk in Milan was used to decorate the new gold altar of the church of Sant’ Ambrogio in 824–59, while the silk in Le Mans was used to wrap the relics of Saint Carilephus (Calais) in 816–32/7.⁸⁶ It is therefore likely that some of the ‘Abbasid gifts included silks decorated with Bahram Gur’s hunt, which in turn would have encouraged the circulation of this eastern tale around the Carolingian court. Notker the Stammerer clearly knew the story about Bahram Gur’s famous hunt, since he used it as the basis for a story he told about Pippin III’s own hunting exploits.⁸⁷ But, as we will see, Notker transformed the story in subtle ways to adapt it to the hunting culture of the Franks.

Based on the evidence of the Astronomer, Rabanus, and silks, it seems that that diplomacy with the ‘Abbasids exposed the Carolingian court to Muslim hunting traditions and game including the onager. Yet a final piece of evidence points to the intriguing conclusion that the Carolingians not only took interest in onager hunting, but also actually imported Asiatic wild asses into Francia. This evidence is a short treatise on hunting and dietary laws written for a Carolingian king. The author is anonymous, but internal evidence suggests that he was a churchman in circles around Rabanus and that he wrote

83 Stuttgart Psalter: Württembergische Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, Cod.bibl.fol.23, fol. 117r; Utrecht Psalter: Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS Bibl. Rhenotriactinae I Nr. 32, fol. 59v.

84 Pertz (ed.), *Annales* 123 (s.a. 807); Einhard, *Vita Karoli* 19 (c.16); Astronomer, *Vita Hludowici* 466–7 (c.46).

85 Volbach, *Early*; Kühnel, Abbasid 367–71; Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium* 80–108.

86 Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium* 95–6 and fig. 61; Volbach, *Early* 87–8, 100–1 and fig. 46; Bouton, *Trésor*, no. 64; Durand et al. (ed.), *Byzance* 195 (no. 130).

87 Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 78–80 (11.15).

the treatise for Louis the German in ca.850.⁸⁸ In this work, the anonymous author attempted to assuage worries around the Carolingian court that hunted game might be considered “strangled” (“suffocatum”) and therefore prohibited by Jesus’s apostles (Acts 15:19–20, 28–29). In this way, the author addressed the Franks’ concerns about ritual purity and pollution with regards to different kinds of food.⁸⁹ The anonymous author refuted this view by making a distinction between animals killed by wild beasts and those slain by a hunter’s trained dogs. He wrote:

We call an animal “strangled” that has been choked to death or torn open by a wolf, bear, or some wild beast. We say that meat of this kind must be avoided and not eaten as food. However, we do not reckon among things strangled an animal that is captured by a dog. This is because the hunt belongs to man, whom the dog accompanies. Man uses a dog’s keen sense of smell and swift speed to capture animals. Thus the capturing is ascribed not to the dog but to the man.⁹⁰

The author went on to say that the same reasoning applied to animals hunted with hawks, falcons, traps, and snares: that it was the hunter himself who was the true agent and that the game therefore did not qualify as strangled. He summed up, “Thus it is proper to conclude generally that whatever is captured by man’s practice, art, and skill ought not to be reckoned among those animals that are strangled.”⁹¹

The author then turned to related concerns people had about eating game that had drowned while being pursued. It is in this context that the author made an unexpected reference to onagers. He wrote:

Many people also inquire whether an animal killed in water ought to be called strangled, or if it is permissible to have it as food. For it often happens that an onager, deer, or some other game, chased by the barking of pursuing dogs, throws itself into a dangerous river and dies in that foreign element, that is, in water. But in this case it is still not reckoned as strangled, since man is the cause and the hunt is his. For when a fish is taken

88 *Ad epistolas variorum supplementum*, no. 10, in Dümmler (ed.), MGH Epistolae v, 633–5. On this text and its probable dedication to Louis the German in ca.850, see Goldberg, Hunt 31–56.

89 On the topic of food and purity, see: Meens, Pollution 3–19; Effros, *Creating* 20.

90 *Ad epistolas variorum supplementum*, no. 10, in Dümmler (ed.), MGH Epistolae v, 633.

91 *Ibid.*

from the water, it too dies in a foreign element, that is, in air. Nevertheless, it is not called strangled or forbidden for human consumption.⁹²

Here it is clear that the author was referring to animals hunted in the Frankish world, not in the Middle East. All the other wild animals he mentioned in the treatise (wolves, bears, deer, doves, cranes, geese) are indigenous to western Europe. It is unlikely that this author invoked the onager merely for stylistic reasons, since he was composing his treatise to address concerns about contemporary hunting practices around the Carolingian court. In other words, this treatise points to the conclusion that there were onagers in Frankish Europe, and that some people were hunting them, around the middle of the ninth century.

Unfortunately the anonymous author did not indicate how common it was to hunt onagers in ninth-century Frankish Europe. Nevertheless, his comment that “it often happens” (“sepe contingit”) that onagers and other animals drowned during hunts suggests that hunting this exotic animal was not unusual at the time he was writing. Adding to this impression is the fact that he listed onagers before deer – the most popular game of the Franks. Since onagers were not indigenous to Europe, hunting them would require keeping them in walled parks to preserve their numbers. This was, after all, the whole point of a game park: to keep in a confined area game that otherwise would be scattered in the wild. Perhaps this explains why Rabanus stressed the difference between the animal’s behavior in the wild and in reserves. Charlemagne seems to have reintroduced the walled game park (“brogilus”) to the West after its disappearance in Late Antiquity, perhaps in conscious imitation of the ‘Abbasids parks.⁹³ We first hear of game parks in the *Capitulare de villis* that probably dates to the 790s, which roughly coincides with Charlemagne sending his ambassadors to Harun al-Rashid in 797.⁹⁴ During the ninth century we hear of game parks at a number of Carolingian palaces: at Aachen, Attigny, Compiègne, Novavilla, Ranshofen, Regensburg, on an island in the Rhine near Ingelheim, and at an

92 *Ibid.* 633–4.

93 There are no references to Byzantine game parks before Liudprand of Cremona’s report from the later tenth century: Ševčenko, *Wild animals* 72–3. On Carolingian game parks, see especially Hauk, *Tiergärten* 30–74. For new approaches to later medieval English hunting reserves, see Liddiard (ed.), *Medieval park*, especially Sykes, *Animal bones* 49–62.

94 *Capitulare de villis*, c.46, in Boretius (ed.), *MGH Capitularia* i, 87. For the *Capitulare de villis*, see McKitterick, *Charlemagne* 149–50. Royal stewards began conscripting locals to help maintain the walls of royal parks as one of their public duties; Louis the Pious tried to put an end to this practice: *Capitula de functionibus publicis*, c. 4, in Boretius (ed.), *MGH Capitularia* i, 295.

unspecified location east of Frankfurt.⁹⁵ The fact that the author of the treatise referred to onagers occasionally drowning in a mighty river (“minax fluvius”) might indicate that he was referring to the Carolingian game park on the island near Ingelheim described by Ermoldus Nigellus. Ermoldus recounted a hunt of Louis the Pious on this island reserve in 826, and he noted that game sometimes perished in the Rhine while pursued by hunters’ dogs.⁹⁶

In addition to its unusual reference to Asiatic wild asses, this treatise shows signs of Muslim influence in another surprising way: its distinctive argument in defense of eating hunted game. The author reasoned that it is permissible to eat game because it is the hunter, not his dog or hawk, who actually made the kill, since the hunter has trained his animals. Game therefore should not be considered prohibited as long as the huntsman gave thanks and invokes God’s name. The author summed up, “Thus it is proper to conclude generally that whatever is captured by man’s practice, art, and skill ought not to be reckoned among those animals that are strangled. Nor is a person who takes food of this kind guilty of a crime, as long as he does so with thanksgiving ... For food is sanctified by faith and the sanctification of the divine name.”⁹⁷ Intriguingly, no previous Church father, Christian writer, or Church council had voiced this particular defense of eating hunted game. However, this is the same argument one finds in the Quran. In Surat Al-Ma’idah, Muhammad sanctioned the eating of game killed by trained hunting animals as long as the hunter invoked the name of Allah:

They ask you, [O Muhammad], what has been made lawful for them [as food]. Say, “Lawful for you are [all] good foods and [game caught by] what you have trained of hunting animals, which you train as Allah taught you. So eat what they catch for you, and mention the name of Allah upon it, and fear Allah.” Indeed, Allah is swift in account.⁹⁸

95 Hauck, Tiergärten 34–8.

96 Ermoldus, *In honorem* 182–3 (lines 2384–5); Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne* 180–1. A candidate for the reserve in the Rhine near Ingelheim is the island of Mariannenaue. Today Mariannenaue measures about two miles long and encompasses some 170 acres, although its dimensions may have changed considerably over the last twelve centuries. For the use of dogs to drive game into rivers and lakes, see Petersen, Mesolithic dogs 147–62 at 151.

97 *Ad epistolas variorum supplementum*, no. 10, in Dümmler (ed.), MGH Epistolae v, 633–4.

98 Q 5:4. Passages in *Hadith* literature reiterate the permissibility of eating game, even if the hunter’s dog killed the animal and thereby prevented the huntsman from making the required pronouncement, “In the name of Allah, Allah is greatest,” as he cut the animal’s throat. The Prophet decreed that a hunter should make the pronouncement over his dogs as he released them instead: “If you unleash your trained dogs and mention God’s name,

In other words, by arguing that it was permissible to eat game hunted with trained animals as long as it was done in God's name, our Carolingian author closely echoed the teachings of the Quran. To be sure, the author Christianized his argument, invoking Titus 1:15 ("All things are clean to the clean"), 1 Timothy 4:4 ("All created things are good and nothing God created is unclean, as long as it is received with thanksgiving"), and Augustine's *Confessions* 10.31.46 ("I fear not unclean food but unclean desire").⁹⁹ But ultimately this line of argument would seem to come from Islamic teachings on hunting. It should not be surprising that Carolingians were familiar with the Quran's pronouncements on hunting, since they undoubtedly discussed dietary restrictions with their Muslim guests during diplomatic visits.¹⁰⁰ The treatise's peculiar references to onagers, as well as its apparent echo of the Quran's teaching on game, suggest a significant level of cultural exchange that took place in the course of Carolingian-'Abbasid diplomacy.

How the Carolingians would have obtained onagers for hunting is far from clear. It is conceivable that they acquired them through the long-distance trade networks that were expanding under Charlemagne and Louis the Pious. Several active trade routes linked Carolingian Europe with the Muslim world, including Venetian fleets that sailed to Egypt and Antioch, Jews that traveled along the middle Danube between Bavaria and the East, and merchants that journeyed overland from Francia to Spain.¹⁰¹ An equally plausible explanation is that the Carolingians received the onagers as diplomatic gifts from the 'Abbasids. As Liudprand's opening anecdote suggests, it was not uncommon for early medieval rulers to exchange exotic animals as part of the gifts that went along with diplomatic alliances.¹⁰² The most famous example of this practice of course is the elephant Abul Abbas that Harun al-Rashid sent Charlemagne among other unspecified "magna munera" in 801.¹⁰³ If Notker is to be believed, the caliph and his representatives also sent Charlemagne mon-

eat what they catch for you, even if they kill it, except if the dog eats it": Allen and Smith, *Some notes* 114–5.

99 *Ad epistolas variorum supplementum*, no. 10, in Dümmler (ed.), *MGH Epistolae* v, 634.

100 The contemporary Carolingian monk Paschasius Radbertus revealed some basic knowledge about the Quran in his commentary on Matthew: Paschasius, *Expositio* XXIV.12, in Paulus (ed.), *Corpus lvi.B*, 1163.

101 McCormick, *Origins* 674–95.

102 For gifts and diplomatic embassies, see Nelson, *Settings* 129–40; Latowsky, *Foreign embassies* 25–57.

103 This pachyderm, which arrived with the name Abul Abbas, must have been the wonder of Charlemagne's court until it unexpectedly died in 810 while accompanying the elderly emperor on campaign in Saxony: Pertz (ed.), *Annales* 114, 116–7, 131 (s.a. 801–2,

keys, an African lion, and a Numidian bear.¹⁰⁴ Notker added that, in return, Charlemagne sent the caliph Spanish horses and mules and Frankish hunting dogs.¹⁰⁵ Whether or not Notker's details are reliable, other sources confirm his emphasis on animals as diplomatic gifts. The *Royal Frankish Annals* reported that King Alfonso II of Asturias sent Charlemagne mules along with armor and Moorish captives after he plundered Lisbon in 798.¹⁰⁶ A later (and admittedly problematic) Arabic source, the *Book of Gifts and Rarities*, alleged that a Carolingian queen sent Caliph al-Muktafi (902–8) gifts that included ten hunting dogs, seven gyrfalcons, and seven hawks.¹⁰⁷ Liudprand reported that King Hugh of Provence sent the Byzantine emperor Romanos I Lekapenos “two dogs of a kind never seen before in that region.”¹⁰⁸ Gifts of Frankish dogs to the ‘Abbasids seem to be confirmed by the Arabic name for one breed of hunting dog, the *zaghari*. Scholars believe that the Arabic name *zaghari* derives from the Old High German word for a pointer, “Zeiger,” which the Franks apparently had introduced to the Muslim world through gifts.¹⁰⁹

Taken together, this evidence indicates that exotic animals, and especially hunting animals and Equids, were common diplomatic gifts in the early Middle Ages. Given the prestige of onager hunting in the Muslim world, it would not be surprising if the ‘Abbasids sent wild asses to the Carolingians. The transport of these wild animals from the Middle East to Francia would have been no small feat, but it certainly was not beyond the means of the ‘Abbasids, who were capable of shipping an elephant across the Mediterranean. Whether obtained through long-distance trade or as diplomatic gifts, the presence of onagers in the Carolingians’ game parks suggests that they were consciously imitating ‘Abbasid hunting traditions. At the same time, unusual animals and menageries at court functioned as symbols of power and empire, demonstrating the Carolingians’ wealth, sophistication, and the wide reach of their alliances with foreign rulers.¹¹⁰ The onagers, Abul Abbas, the Bahram Gur silks, and the revived

810). Concerning Abul Abbas, see, Dutton, Charlemagne 59–61; Hack, *Abul*; Dreßen, Minkenbergh, Oellers (eds.), *Ex oriente*.

104 Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 61–2 (II. 8–9); Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne* 99n.114. Borgolte, *Gesandtenaustausch* 131–5, doubts the reliability of Notker's list of gifts.

105 Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 63 (II.9).

106 Pertz (ed.), *Annales* 104–5 (s.a. 798 – both versions).

107 Concerning this source, see Christys, Queen 149–70.

108 Liudprand, *Antapodosis* III.23, in Becker (ed.), *Werke* 82–3.

109 Allsen, *Royal hunt* 240; Viré, Kalb. The earliest Arabic reference to *zaghari* is tenth century. See further Usama, *Book* 221.

110 Hauck, Tiergärten 45–7; Dutton, Charlemagne 43–68.

institution of the game park itself all seem to have been different aspects of a Carolingian “*imitatio Persarum*” in the realm of hunting and political culture.

The fate of these Carolingian onagers is a mystery. Apparently they were gone by the Ottonian period, when Liudprand described them to Otto I as an exotic animal which “none of your royal predecessors ever saw.”¹¹¹ Perhaps the Carolingians simply hunted them to extinction. Even if they had sought to preserve them, the limited initial number of onagers may have led to health problems from inbreeding in the course of two or three generations.¹¹² Another factor that also probably played a role in the disappearance of the onagers was the cultural biases of the Frankish elite. This article began with Liudprand scoffing at the onagers in the Byzantine imperial game park, dismissing them as little different from the donkeys on sale in Italy. In the early Middle Ages, donkeys were associated with agricultural labor and thus with people of lower status. It was for this reason that the author of the Old Saxon *Heliand* passed over in silence the fact that Jesus rode a donkey when he entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.¹¹³ The Franks may have been especially uneasy about eating Equids, since there were strong, class-based taboos against consuming horsemeat in early medieval Europe. While it was accepted that the poor might do so, nobles found the consumption of horse abhorrent, partly because horses were so closely associated with their status.¹¹⁴ Because consuming horsemeat demonstrated that one was not a member of the elite, some Frankish nobles may have viewed onager hunting as undignified and therefore rejected it.

A final anecdote from Notker supports the theory that Frankish cultural biases would have undermined the popularity of onager hunting under the Carolingians. As already mentioned, Notker apparently knew the story about Bahram Gur slaying the lion and onager, since he appropriated it for a memorable anecdote about the first Carolingian king. Notker recounted how Pippin III, like the legendary Persian prince, slew two wild animals with a single stroke and thereby won the respect of the Frankish nobles.¹¹⁵ But Notker modified two details of this eastern tale, apparently to adapt it to the culture of the Frankish elite. First, he replaced Bahram’s Persian arrow with a Frankish sword, thereby highlighting Pippin’s personal bravery by having him approach within striking distance of the lion’s claws. Second, he claimed that the lion had pounced, not on an onager, but rather on a wild bull. This second substitution suggests that,

111 Liudprand, *Legatio*, cc. 37–8, in Becker (ed.), *Werke* 194–5.

112 Dr. Petra Kaczensky (personal communication).

113 Murphy (trans.), *Heliand* 121 and n.177.

114 Meens, *Eating* 3–28, esp. 4–11, 17–8.

115 Notker, *Gesta Karoli* 78–80 (II.15); Dutton, *Charlemagne* 49.

in Notker's eyes, the Asiatic onager was not a type of game worthy of a great king like Pippin. But when the Franks saw Pippin slay the lion and bull with a single stroke of his sword, they fell before him and proclaimed, "Only an insane person would deny your power to command all living things!"

Appendix: Images



FIGURE 1 *Onagers in the Gobi Desert, Mongolia.*

PHOTO: DR. PETRA KACZENSKY; USED BY PERMISSION



FIGURE 2

An onager surrounded by wild beasts, illustrating Psalm 104:11 (Vulgate 103:11): "All the beasts of the field will drink, the onager will quench its thirst".

STUTTGART PSALTER, WÜRTTEMBERGISCHE
LANDESBIBLIOTHEK STUTTGART, COD.BIBL.
FOL.23, FOL. 117R



FIGURE 3

Onagers from the Utrecht Psalter.

UTRECHT, UNIVERSITEITSBIBLIOTHEEK, MS
BIBL. RHENOTRAIECTINAE I NR. 32, FOL. 59V

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Ethnicity in the Carolingian Empire

Walter Pohl

Alcuin's Identifications

A famous foreigner at the court of Charlemagne can serve as a test case of the significance (and the limits) of ethnicity in the Carolingian empire: Alcuin.¹ He was born in Northumbria around 730 and received an excellent education in the liberal arts at York. In the 780s, he followed Charlemagne's invitation to be affiliated to the Frankish court, and acted as a prolific scholar, a reformer and as an adviser to the king. He became abbot of St. Martin at Tours, where he died in 804. Alcuin remembered that he had come to Francia as a foreigner, *alienus*, referring to the example of Moses, who had relied on the advice of an *alienigena*, his Midianite father-in-law Jethro (Ex 18, 17–27).² In fact, Charlemagne's court circle of intellectuals comprised several foreigners, for instance the Hispanic Goth Theodulf and the Italian Lombards Peter of Pisa and Paul the Deacon, who prided themselves in their Latin nicknames and poetic exchanges.³ Alcuin called himself 'Albinus', recalling the first Anglo-Saxon to become abbot of St. Peter and Paul's in Canterbury (+732), a highly educated pupil of Theodor of Canterbury, but also classicized by the *praenomen* Publius; yet he also used Flaccus like the poet Horace.⁴

Being a foreigner could have very positive connotations for Alcuin. In his Life of St. Willibrord, his relative from Northumbria, who as a young man had gone to Ireland to study and later worked as a missionary in Frisia, Alcuin gives a positive account of Willibrord's decision to leave his *patria*: "For the love of the celestial fatherland, he withdrew from house, fatherland and kin to Hibernia."⁵ The *amor peregrinationis*, the love of pilgrimage, was still strong in the insular tradition. However, foreigners could be met with prejudices even

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2 Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, ed. Dümmler 113. Cf. Pohl, Why not marry a foreign woman.

3 McKitterick, *Charlemagne* 348; Garrison, *Emergence* 116–9.

4 Garrison, *The social world of Alcuin* 61.

5 Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 4, 118.

among monks, as Alcuin experienced as an abbot at Tours: his monks protested when he introduced another *Engilsaxo* in the monastery, whom they rather contemptuously classed as *Britto vel Scoto*, British or Scottish (Irish).⁶

We have some clear statements of Alcuin's Anglian identity, in particular in his letter to Aethelheard, Archbishop of Canterbury, written in the wake of the sack of the monastery of Lindisfarne by the Vikings (793). "Our fathers, God allowing, although pagans, took this land by their bellicose virtues. How big is our disgrace that we Christians lose what those pagans won."⁷ He identifies himself as an Angle both in an ethnic sense (as descendent of the pagan Angles who conquered Northumbria) and in a broader, Christian/ethnic meaning, as member of the *ecclesia Anglorum*, the Anglian/English Church – which included the Saxons.⁸ In fact, Alcuin identifies his Northumbrian relative Willibrord as *genere Saxo*, Saxon by descent.⁹ In the 8th century, Anglian and Saxon identities increasingly became blurred – that was in part due to successive political unification, but also to the way in which Bede had established a unified vision of the 'Anglian' Church – the assonance to 'angelic' made this option attractive. "Not Angles but Angels", was what Pope Gregory reputedly had said when he saw an Anglian boy at a slave market. It was only in the late 8th century that the composite "Anglo-Saxons" also came to be used.¹⁰

Apart from stressing his English allegiance, Alcuin also propagated Frankish identity in some occasions, for instance in his version of the *Life of St. Vedast*, in which he greatly expanded the part on the baptism of King Clovis and his followers. He quotes the First Letter of Peter in the New Testament to maintain that the *gens Francorum* had turned into a *gens sancta, populus acquisitionis* by this act.¹¹ He uses the same quote for the Angles, though, in the above-mentioned letter to Aethelheard: "By the insistence of your preaching we will be (...) *gens sancta, populus acquisitionis*."¹² And it appears in a letter addressed to Gothic clerics in the south of Gaul.¹³ Peoples could enjoy special grace and divine election, which was mainly expressed through their smooth conversion. God's grace could also be shown by victories and political success, yet it was

6 *Vita Alcuini* 18, 193; Pohl, Ethnic names and identities. In general about ethnic prejudice: Meyvaert, Rainaldus.

7 Alcuin, *Epistola* 17, 47.

8 Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

9 Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 1, 116.

10 Pohl, W., Ethnic names. *Vita Alcuini* 18, 193, is an early example.

11 Alcuin, *Vita Vedastis II*, 2, 418.

12 Alcuin, *Epistola* 17, 47. Cf. Garrison, The bible 73–6.

13 Heydemann and Pohl, The rhetoric.

easily squandered by sin, which could result in disasters such as the destruction of Lindisfarne.¹⁴ Alcuin makes the connection very clear in a passage in his *Life of St. Vedast*: “because of the sins of the inhabitants of that land”, the Huns devastate Gaul, “like in the devastation of Jerusalem by the impious King of Babylon, the pagan peoples (*gentes*) came into God’s heritage.”¹⁵ Preaching was essential to ward off these dangers, a concern in many of Alcuin’s letters.¹⁶ This was a vision of community that took the *gentes* as natural units of society, each of whom were called to salvation, and who might collectively incur God’s punishment for the acts of some among them, especially if they were kings or clerics.

As conversion was an expression of God’s grace, it made little sense to enforce it. Alcuin therefore disagreed with Charlemagne about repressive measures and the harsh imposition of the tithes in the conversion of the Saxons; the yoke of Christ should appear sweet to newly-converted peoples.¹⁷ This soft approach to Saxon conversions may have had something to do with Alcuin’s sense of relatedness to the continental Saxons. Earlier missionaries to these ‘*Antiqui Saxones*’ had sought support from England by claiming that they said of the Anglosaxons: “We are of one blood and one bone.”¹⁸ The Goth Theodulf seems to have supported a much harder line in the Saxon mission than Alcuin.¹⁹ Yet Alcuin’s concerns were not mainly due to Anglo-Saxon ‘ethnic’ solidarities; Alcuin’s letters were written after the defeat of the Avars, and mainly sought to avoid repeating problems that had beset the Saxon missions.

Alcuin’s point was to let God’s grace for other peoples unfold peacefully, although he did not object in principle to Carolingian policies that linked subduing pagan peoples and converting them. In his view, no particular people was chosen by God in the way the Old Testament Jews had claimed to be. This was not just Alcuin’s view; in spite of some strong rhetoric, no consistent ideology of divine election of the Franks emerged in the Carolingian period.²⁰ Alcuin was aware that he lived in a world of *gentes*, not simply in an Augustinian

14 Heydemann and Pohl, The rhetoric.

15 *Tunc in similitudine Hierosolomitanae vastationis, quae ab impio rege Babiloniae facta est, venerunt gentes in hereditatem Dei.* Alcuin, *Vita Vedastis II*, 7, 421.

16 Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik* 58–66.

17 *Suave iugum Christi*: Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, 153; *Epistola* 111, 161 (both written in 796); Wood, *The missionary life* 80–9; Pohl, *Das sanfte Joch Christi*.

18 Bonifatius, *Epistola* 46 (c. 738), 75: *Miseremini illorum, quia et ipsi solent dicere: ‘de uno sanguine et de uno osse sumus.’* Pohl, *Sächsische Identitäten*.

19 See Hen, *Charlemagne’s jihad*.

20 Garrison, *The Franks*.

civitas terrena. All the *gentes* were called to salvation, and shared some collective responsibility for attaining it. Even Alcuin's history of "The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York" is much concerned with Angles, Saxons, Britons, Picts and others, and the index lists more occurrences of *gens* than of *ecclesia*.²¹

The impression that we get from these fragmentary pieces of evidence, and many others, is somewhat ambiguous. It does not quite correspond to the naturalistic concepts of ethnicity that traditional scholarship worked with. An Anglo-Saxon scholar mostly active on the continent clearly regarded himself and his colleagues at home as 'Angles' or 'Saxons', and felt uneasy about the moral shortcomings of his compatriots and about the consequences for God's mercy. Yet his identity was complex, and to a different extent, he also felt affiliated to the Frankish monarchy, to the Roman Church, to the classical tradition and to a small group of cosmopolitan intellectuals. In the Frankish context, it was this mixed group of Franks and non-Franks, of subjects of Charlemagne and foreigners that were committed to the success of Charlemagne's reform policies, and contributed to its progress.

Alcuin's concerns and acts of identification sketched above make clear that debating whether they were 'ethnic', 'political' or 'religious', or perhaps something else altogether, would not be very productive. Rather, we should start by looking at them as single acts of identification, most of them rather complex and embedded in situations of interaction and communication. The clearest act of individual self-identification as member of the *gens Anglorum* is the letter to Aethelheard in which Alcuin talks about 'our fathers', the pagan Angles; the juxtaposition 'we Christians – those pagans' provides a stronger axis of identification. The implication is clear and unsurprising: Anglian/English identity had to be unfailingly Christian in order to enjoy God's protection.

Although he stood in the service of Charlemagne, Alcuin would not have personally identified with the Franks. However, he belonged to a small circle of people, spokesmen, who had the capacity to express collective Frankish identity. His acts of – political, religious, but also ethnic – identification typically contained both elements of affirmation and of exhortation. Alcuin's three letters that quote from the First Letter of Peter to remind Franks, Angles and Goths of their precarious status as *gens sancta*, *populus acquisitionis* all maintain a careful balance between positive identification and severe admonishment.²² In the area that Alcuin felt responsible for, the Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Church, collective self-identification and the identification of

21 Alcuin, *The bishops*.

22 Heydemann and Pohl, *The rhetoric*.

others worked much along the same lines, apart from the repeated use of the first person plural in the Aethelheard letter. Alcuin's careful attention to the moral progress of all Christian peoples within his political horizon (even of the newly-converted Avars, who had for a long time been the pagan enemies *par excellence*) was just one way of perceiving of the 'other', of foreign peoples in the Carolingian period. Prejudice, even among his own monks, was another. The *alienus* and *Engilsaxo* Alcuin himself may have incurred some adversity in the Frankish kingdom.

These three forms of identification – of an individual with a group (which had to be accepted by this 'in-group'), of the group as a collective by its spokesmen, and by outsiders – constitute social identities.²³ Identities thus are not what a group 'has', but what is established, maintained or modified in a series of interactions in which the cohesion of the group is at stake. Our sources are traces of this process of communication in which identities are negotiated. Remarkably, Alcuin could act as a representative of Frankish identity without identifying as a Frank himself. Still, this was how ethnic identities were constructed. As I would define it, 'ethnicity' is a way to distinguish between relatively large social groups regarded as naturally constituted. Ideas of kinship and common origin associated with ethnicity provide a powerful metaphor that can help to create allegiance within originally disparate groupings. But at the same time, this form of cohesion is precarious because the high promise of intragroup solidarity does not always stand the test. Ethnic identities therefore typically blend with other forms of allegiance, political, religious, military, territorial or other. Such aggregates of identity are still badly understood (the modern nation is a particularly successful and institutionalized form).

Ethnicity did not mean the same in different societies, and in the same society it could be more or less important, 'salient', for different people or at different times. There are a number of criteria by which to judge that, for instance perceptions of the social world as being divided into ethnic groups, the political use of ethnicity or the way in which religious beliefs legitimized ethnic distinctions. In my view, this model is more flexible than other approaches to ethnicity (for example, by lists of distinctive features). It certainly allows appreciating Alcuin's ethnic identifications, and their limits. If we only look at the significance of ethnic identities in his writings it may be easy to argue that Christian or political identities were more important to him. If, however, we regard his acts of identification as composite, we can see that his Christian visions of community were entangled with ethnic and political distinctions.

23 For this and the following, see Pohl, Introduction: Strategies of identification.

Carolingian Rule and the Gentes

In recent research, ethnicity has been regarded as relatively irrelevant for the Carolingian period, when Church and empire grabbed the limelight.²⁴ As has often been assumed, the quest for universal empire made Frankish kingdom and identity seem secondary. Thus, the role of ethnicity under Carolingian rule has received little attention lately, both in terms of focused studies and in the context of larger publications on Charlemagne and his kingdom and later empire (and the 1200th anniversary of his death has given occasion to numerous publications).²⁵ We certainly should not take ethnicity for granted, neither what it was nor what it meant; but at the same time, little can be gained by leaving it out of the equation.

Traditionally, the subject of ethnicity in the Carolingian period was treated by going through the list of major peoples living under Carolingian rule: Franks, Alamanni, Bavarians, Thuringians, Frisians, Longobards, Goths, Saxons, 'Romans', Slavs and others. Older scholarship, particularly in Germany, had put the focus on Carolingian suppressions of the 'older tribal duchies' (Ältere Stammesherzogtümer) of the Bavarians, Alamanni or Saxons, and on their eventual re-emergence as components of a German people. More recently, in the 1980s and 1990s, the 'Nationes' group stressed the Carolingian transformation from 'gentile' (ethnic) kingdoms to the emerging, supra-ethnic medieval nations.²⁶ Both models more or less privileged a linear development, in which the Carolingian empire could either be regarded as a false start or as a catalyst. The Annales School regarded the Carolingian period as a failed departure into medieval Europe.²⁷ In recent German research, the interest lay not least in the political structure of the Carolingian realm, and in the relationship of the sub-units with the Frankish kingdom and the empire.²⁸ All of that left relatively little space for considering what ethnicity may have meant in the Carolingian period. It departed from the assumption that the ethnic groups of early medieval Europe were basically 'there', and could or could not become

24 Discussing ethnicity in the late Merovingian and Carolingian period: Wenskus, *Die deutschen Stämme*; Ewig, *Volkstum* (for the 7th century); more recently: Wood, *Defining the Franks* (mostly about the Merovingian period); Pohl, *Zur Bedeutung*; Nelson, *Frankish Identity*; Reimitz, *History*.

25 McKitterick, *Charlemagne*; Fried, *Karl der Große*; Becher, *Karl der Große*.

26 Beumann and Schröder (eds.), *Aspekt*; Bernd Schneidmüller, *Nomen Patriae*; Ehlers, *Entstehung*; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*; Bues and Rexhauser (eds.), *Mittelalterliche nationes – neuzeitliche Nationen*; Brühl and Schneidmüller (eds.), *Beiträge*.

27 LeGoff, *Birth* 29; in the French original: *L'Europe*.

28 For a recent summary, see Schieffer, *Die Zeit* 70–3.

politically relevant. In recent research, the trend was to minimize their political role.

Perhaps it was rather the other way round: we cannot always take the existence, extension, 'groupness' of these *gentes* for granted; but they mattered in political discourse. Helmut Reimitz has shown that the experimental and open-ended process of giving a meaning to being Franks "never resulted in the establishment of a single dominant conception of Frankish identity in the Merovingian and Carolingian period."²⁹ On the other hand, these experiments, negotiations, struggles and reflections about Frankish identity, which Reimitz has reconstructed from the surviving sources, demonstrate that it mattered. Being a Frank, and a particular kind of Frank, could entail access to power, social status, legal protection, economic privilege, and even a better chance for salvation. It could – because such claims were also contested, both in principle and in individual cases. The admittedly scarce traces of this play of identifications and counter-identifications allow constructing a relatively fine-tuned narrative about when Frankish identity mattered, and to whom. This is the story that Helmut Reimitz has told in his book about 'History, Frankish Identity and the Shaping of Western Ethnicity'.³⁰ The ebb and flow of Frankish identifications also had implications for other identities, given that ethnicity is all about distinctions.

The ethnonym 'Franks' did not only allow distinguishing between the Frankish people and kingdom and those of the Lombards, Anglosaxons or Danes. It also remained a marker of social distinction and of political agency within the Frankish kingdom. This contributed to its ambiguity at any one time. The *Continuations of Fredegarii*, a chronicle close to the Carolingian mayors of the place in the mid-8th century, are mostly concerned with Franks as a small elite group or as an army, who, under Carolingian leadership, have the say in affairs of state. The *Franci* or the *gens Francorum* raise kings, wage war, decide political issues in assemblies or start conspiracies. Pippin III sends an embassy to the pope with the consensus of all Franks, *omnium Francorum*, and he assembles *omnes Francos, sicut mos Francorum est*, at Berny-Rivière.³¹ The army marching on Bourges under his leadership unites *universa multitudo gentis Francorum* (c. 43). The Frankish core group is distinguished with very volatile designations such as *maiores natu Francorum* (c. 2), *proceres Francorum* (c. 38), *optimates Francorum* (c. 42) or *nobiles Francorum*.³² 'Franks' can also be

29 Reimitz, *History* 2.

30 Reimitz, *History*.

31 *Continuationes Fredegarii* 33, 182; 37, 183–4; similarly *Annales Mettenses Priores* a. 692, 14.

32 Ewig, *Volkstum* 261; Pohl, *Zur Bedeutung*.

used in a more inclusive sense, for instance in the laws; only rarely do we hear, as in the *Vita Erminonis*, that someone came *ex mediocri gente Francorum*.³³ A regional specification is found in the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, which sometimes reserves the term *Franci* for the Neustrian Franks.³⁴ In most cases, *Francia* was not co-extensive with the kingdom; an army returned to *Francia* from Aquitaine when it crossed the Loire.³⁵

The early Carolingian period was a time in which ethnic self-identification was at its height, roughly from Pippin III's rise to kingship to the years before Charlemagne's imperial coronation. The Frankish sources are full of references to the Franks, and to the Carolingians handling all matters of state *una cum Francis*. This rhetoric was probably intended to inspire a sense of loyalty with the new dynasty that needed the approval of the Frankish elites for its policy of expansion and consolidation. The long prologue to the *Lex Salica*, probably added in the 760s, ascribes divine origin to the entire people:

The whole Frankish people, established by the power of God, are strong in arms, weighty in council, firm in the compact of peace, pure in body, distinguished in form, brave, swift and austere. Recently converted to the Catholic faith, they are free from heresy, rejecting barbarian rites with the help of God, keeping the faith; and according to their customs they seek the key to wisdom and desire justice.³⁶

God and the *gens* thus came to form the double basis for legitimate rulership. At the same time, the surrounding political landscape was pictured as a world of *gentes* who became the objects of the yearly campaigns that Carolingian leaders fought with the consent of the Franks, as the texts frequently underline.³⁷

Political integration of conquered peoples could take many forms. On the one hand, a conquered kingdom could simply be attached to Charlemagne's rule, as expressed in his title *rex Francorum et Langobardorum* after his conquest of the Lombard kingdom in 774. In fact, Charlemagne was the first king in Italy who employed the title *rex gentis Langobardorum* in his royal charters in Italy – the Lombard kings had just used it in their law codes, but not in the charters which were mostly addressed to ecclesiastic institutions.³⁸ On the

33 *Vita Erminonis* 1, 462.

34 Wood, *Defining the Franks*.

35 *Continuationes Fredegarii* 2, 169.

36 *Lex Salica*, Prologus, 2.

37 Pohl, *Zur Bedeutung*.

38 Pohl, *Gens ipsa peribit*.

other hand, there was the heavy-handed submission of the Saxons. According to Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, the war only ended when the Saxons accepted all the king's conditions: to abandon pagan cults, to accept Christian faith, and that "they would unite with the Franks to form one people", *Francis adunati unus cum eis populus efficerentur*.³⁹ This implied a promise for those who wanted to join the ranks of the Christian people and the political body of the Franks, but also a warning for those who hoped to maintain a distinct Saxon political identity. There was a whole spectrum of political measures in between, which always contained an element of identity politics.⁴⁰

When the expansive drive began to subside, other forms of integration were needed that could instil a sense of belonging in the many ethnic and regional groups that now lived under Carolingian rule.⁴¹ Empire was one of the unifying visions used to further a more inclusive vision; the *ecclesia* of the realm, and its *populus Christianus*, were another one.⁴² These unifying visions did not obliterate more particular identities at all. On the one hand, Frankishness remained a powerful mode of identification. When the Carolingian authorities tuned down their ethnic rhetoric, it increasingly became available for more particular purposes. For instance, it could be used to bolster the particular identities and prerogatives of regional or social Frankish groups. Alternative ethnic identities could unfold within a political system based on empire, using the modes of identification shaped by Carolingian government.⁴³ Alamanni/Swabians, Bavarians or Saxons had preserved their regional/ethnic identities, and recovered political momentum in the course of the ninth century.⁴⁴ When the empire was relaunched in the tenth century, it served as a grandiose umbrella for a world laid out along ethnic lines, at least north of the Alps and east of the Rhine. When the Byzantine emperor Nicephorus challenged Otto I's ambassador Liudprand of Cremona: "You are not Romans, but Lombards!", Liudprand famously replied that "we, that is, Lombards, Saxons, Franks, Lotharingians, Bavarians, Suavians and Burgundians, regard 'Roman!' as one of the worst insults."⁴⁵

39 Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni* 7, 10; Pohl, *Gens ipsa peribit*.

40 For Bavaria see Airlie, *Narratives of triumph*.

41 For an overview, see Reuter, *Charlemagne*.

42 Mayke de Jong, *The empire as ecclesia*. For the role of the Church in the Carolingian world, see also Noble, *Images, iconoclasm, and the Carolingians*.

43 Reimitz, *History*.

44 Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*.

45 Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana* 12, 182–3; for an excellent analysis: Gandino, *Il vocabolario* 257–70.

It is remarkable that west of the Rhine, regional identities based on classical, former ethnic or recent political distinctions (Aquitaine, Provence, Burgundy, Lotharingia, Alsace) came to play a role very similar to the 'ethnic' duchies in the east.⁴⁶ It would not make much sense to class them simply as 'territorial' as opposed to 'ethnic' groups and identities. In both cases, the lay-out was regional, the frame political, and the cohesion, if to a different extent, ethnic. The test of their cohesiveness came when the duchies lost their autonomy or were (as in the east) split into ever smaller units in the course of the Middle Ages. In most cases, it turned out that the attachment to *patria* and *gens* survived the loss of political coherence. In the long run, that could have different results: Bavaria, Brittany or Alsace maintained their shape and identity; Swabia and Lotharingia shrank somewhat; Saxony and Burgundy shifted their location on the map. Quite paradoxically, Bavaria was part of Eastern *Francia* one thousand years ago, while modern *Franken* forms part of Bavaria.

An area in which ethnic distinctions are very obvious in the Carolingian period was the legal sphere. In the post-Roman period, most kingdoms had produced their own code of written law, *lex*, such as the *Lex Burgundionum* or the *Leges Langobardorum*. The Franks had two such codifications, the *Lex Salica* and the *Lex Ribuaria*. The use of these *Leges* was complemented by Roman law, mostly on the basis of compilations also produced in the post-Roman kingdoms. Carolingian expansion united many of these originally territorial legal spheres in the Carolingian realm. Their different legal traditions were accepted, so that Frankish subjects had the right to be judged according to their own law, which was determined according to ethnic affiliation: the principle of the 'personality of the law', as it was called by legal historians (who believed for a long time that this was an ancient Germanic heritage). Charlemagne also encouraged and/or promulgated codifications of further law codes for Frisians, Thuringians and others.

In consequence, each of the subject peoples of the Franks had their own law code.⁴⁷ This may seem like a straightforward form of ethnic identification, which included a codified practice of ascertaining personal affiliation. However, recent research has demonstrated that the system was elastic and thus did not necessarily coincide with the ethnic identities it was supposed to reflect. First, Charlemagne's systematic promulgation, or re-issue of ethnic law codes, soon after his imperial coronation, was an ideological as well as a pragmatic measure. He did not create the pluralism of law in his empire, but turned

46 Schneidmüller, *Nomen patriae*; McLean, *History and politics*.

47 For a recent overview, see Hoppenbrouwers, *Leges nationum*. See also Ubl, *Die erste Leges-Reform*.

it into something of a gesture to acknowledge the plurality of ethnic and legal identities under his rule.⁴⁸ The texts that report his law-giving activities underline his agency, although in practice it is rather likely that these codifications had been negotiated with the respective regional elites.⁴⁹ A text edited under the title *Lex Francorum Chamavorum* (but entitled in the only surviving manuscript *Notitia vel Commemoratio de illa Euua quae se ad Amorem habet*) reflects the eagerness of the local elites near the Lower Rhine to “have it as other Franks do”; a ‘Francus’ receives the triple *wergeld*, compensation for any injury, of an ordinary free man.⁵⁰ Status, identity and local custom were at stake, and Charlemagne was prepared to grant such idiosyncrasies. Another attestation of negotiations between envoys from the centre and regional representatives was the Placitum of Rižana in recently-conquered Istria in 804.⁵¹ Interestingly, the Frankish law codes were the only ones not identified by an ethnic label in the title. About 150 surviving manuscripts of law from the Carolingian period, in diverse combinations, attest to the considerable investment in this legal system, and to the imposing materiality of these codifications.⁵² At the same time, Charlemagne complemented and sometimes undercut these à-la-carte regulations by numerous capitularies which mostly regarded all subjects regardless of their ethnic background.

Second, the fact that there was an element of choice in it could privilege opportunistic decisions instead of direct expressions of ethnic identity. For instance, Archbishop Agobard of Lyons wrote a hefty piece of polemic against the ‘Gundobadi’, the villains who claimed to be Burgundians at law-courts because that meant judgement according to the Burgundian *Lex Gundobada*, which granted the privilege of escaping conviction by judicial combat.⁵³ Agobard advocated the creation of a common Christian law that he called ‘Frankish’. ‘Burgundian’ was an attractive but elusive identity since the kingdom of the Burgundians had been overwhelmed by the Franks in the 530s, and turned into a Frankish kingdom. This territorial frame had faded out in the Carolingian period, but its traditional appeal lasted, so that in the course of medieval history ‘Burgundy’ could migrate between Provence and the Low Countries.

48 Cf. Esders, *Fidelität*.

49 Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 29, 33; *Annales Laureshamenses* 39; cf. Faulkner, *Carolingian kings*.

50 *Lex Francorum Chamavorum* 1; 3, 271; <http://www.leges.uni-koeln.de/lex/lex-francorum-chamavorum/>

51 *Placitum*, 111–5; Esders, *Regionale Selbstbehauptung*.

52 McKitterick, *Carolingians and the written word* 23–76.

53 Agobard of Lyons, *Adversus legem Gundobadi*; Wood, *Ethnicity* 53–4.

Third, another issue that counteracted clear-cut ethnic distinctions in the legal system was that the plurality of law was not only ethnic. Compilations of Roman Law were more important than often assumed, and were duly copied in manuscripts.⁵⁴ Its range of uses did not follow any coherent sense of Roman identity.⁵⁵ Manumission of slaves might still lead to the adoption of Roman law, at least for church freedmen.⁵⁶ Then, there was also canon law, and great efforts went into its collection and development. It was not only accessible for clerics; laypeople could sometimes escape the more draconic sides of lay law codes by submitting to ecclesiastical justice. For instance, a letter of Patriarch Paulinus of Aquileia offered such alternatives to a man who had killed his wife in jealousy.⁵⁷

Another problematic area in which ethnic identification could be an issue was language.⁵⁸ The Strasbourg oaths, sworn 842 between the followers of the West Frankish king Charles the Bald (in Old French) and those of the East Frankish Ruler Louis the German (in Old High German), were long interpreted as representing 'the birth of two nations'.⁵⁹ The oaths attest to the linguistic Romanisation of the Western Frankish elites, and to an increasing sense of distance between speakers of Germanic and Romance languages in the Carolingian empire; but that hardly constituted anything like a national divide. Soon, tools for communication were created, such as glossaries or the so-called 'Paris Dialogues' that represent examples of everyday interaction: *Guelche lande cum en ger, id est de qua patria? E guas meringene francia, id est in francia fui*.⁶⁰

The use of the German outside designation for Romance speakers and other southern/western neighbours, **walhisk* (Welsh, Wallach, Vlach...), demonstrates the varied social topography of language distinctions.⁶¹ They could very well be linked with prejudice and contempt, as attested by the entry in a Bavarian glossary: "Stupid are the Romans, wise are the Bavarians."⁶² The term for the self-identification of the speakers of German/ic was derived from the

54 Liebs, *Römische Jurisprudenz*.

55 Esders, Roman law.

56 *Lex Ribuaria* 61 (58), 195–7.

57 Paulinus, *Epistola* 16, 520–2. Pohl, *Le leggi longobarde*.

58 Pohl and Zeller (eds.), *Sprache und Identität*, in particular, Pohl, *Einleitung*; Goetz, *Lingua*; Haubrichs, *Differenz*; see also Geary, *Language and power*.

59 Nithard, *Historiae* 3, 5, 35–7.

60 Haubrichs and Pfister, "*In Francia fui*".

61 Pohl and Hartl (eds.), *Walchen*.

62 *Stulti sunt romani sapienti sunt paioari*: *Kasseler Gespräche*, ed. Braune and Ebbinghaus 8–9; Wolfram, *Grenzen und Räume* 295.

language, the *lingua theodisca* (language of the people, *theod*). This initially referred to all Germanic languages, from Old English to that of the Lombards, before it became reduced to German, *Deutsch*. Besides, the more specific term *frenkisk*, Frankish, was used, but there is no systematic correspondence between ethnonyms and the names of languages derived from them. Old High German, as philologists term the language, had dialects; its speakers could understand each other, but could also notice regional differences. Yet there is little proof that this was coterminous with the ethnic divides. From the mid-9th century, language differences between speakers of *theodisk* and those of Late Latin/Old French were increasingly associated with the divide between the Eastern and the Western Frankish parts of the kingdom. Otfrid of Weißenburg and other Germanophone intellectuals (with an excellent education in classical Latin) started promoting *theodisk/frenkisk* as a literate language, and produced poetry, translations and glossaries.⁶³ However, this upsurge of language patriotism was limited to a relatively small circle of intellectuals, and constituted little more than an episode. Written elite communication remained predominantly Latin for some centuries to come, and this larger cultural space also cross-cut more deeply rooted language identities.

Around 900, Regino of Prüm listed *genus, mores, lingua* and *leges* as distinctive features of peoples.⁶⁴ Origin, customs, language and law: these (or similar) elements were considered as key features of ethnicity, from the Carolingian period to modern scholarship. Law was in fact a Carolingian addition to earlier lists of that kind, due to the spread of legal pluralism. The problem with this (or similar) lists of features is that it is not always easy to make these elements coincide. In the Carolingian period, the boundaries between groups constituted, respectively, by common origin, custom, language and law seem to have matched only partially. The brief discussion above was not intended to demonstrate that language, law or political organisation were totally malleable or irrelevant for the formation of identities. But they cannot be regarded as natural expressions of an underlying, naturally given group affiliation. Rather, they formed part of the complex process of identification, and the resulting multiplicity created some fuzziness in the overlap of *gens, patria*, language, church organisation, political affiliation and law.

Still, the conceptual language that was used to delineate social groupings and to describe their agency remained largely ethnic. 'Frankish' was the current designation for all of these modes of identification: the *gens Francorum*,

63 Otfrid of Weißenburg, *Evangelienbuch*, c.1, 1, 11; cf. Sonderegger, *Grundzüge* 40–1.

64 *Diversae nationes populorum inter se discrepant genere moribus lingua legibus*. *Epistula Reginonis ad Hathonem archiepiscopum missa*, in Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, xx.

Francia, the language *frenkisk*, the *regnum Francorum* and, more indirectly, Frankish law (Salian or Ribuarian). Many Franks did not speak *frenkisk* (only later was the Romance language called French) or did not live in the *Francia* (the term was mostly used for the Frankish core areas); and the Frankish kingdom and Church accommodated a majority of people who by most standards were no Franks. Yet the *passe-partout* use of 'Frankish' was not simply a traditional designation devoid of substantial content. It provided a unity of concept that could serve as a point of reference for all these complementary modes of identification. In practice, this common frame of identifications remained more or less elusive throughout the Middle Ages. But as a conceptual matrix, it provided essential resources for the later development of European nations.

Comparative Outlook: Ethnicity in East and West

Comparing the political role of ethnicity between the 'Abbasid and the Carolingian worlds may help put our observations in perspective. At first glance, one might see parallels: Arabs and Franks construct an empire and establish their rule over numerous other peoples, Persians, Kurds, Turks, Armenians, resp. Lombards, Bavarians, Saxons, Avars, Slavs; and over countries largely inhabited by an autochthonous population, such as Syria or Egypt, resp. Aquitaine or Italy. When the empire begins to crumble, new peripheral dynasties, often with an ethnic background, grab power, partly legitimized from the imperial centre (although in that respect, the parallels between the dissolution of the Western Roman Empire and of 'Abbasid caliphal rule are more striking). Seen from a slightly different angle, however, the relationship between ethnicity and political legitimacy appears to be quite different in both political cultures. The Frankish ruler was called *rex Francorum*, and the title remained fundamental in the period when some of these kings could become *imperator Romanorum augustus*. Caliphs carried the title of Commanders of the Faithful, but did not style themselves as rulers 'of the Arabs'. The same happened when new dynasties began to control many territories of the Caliphate; their polities were mostly distinguished by their dynastic names, not by their ethnic background.

Why were polities often named after peoples in the early medieval Latin West, and not in the early Islamic World?⁶⁵ Already when the Western Roman

65 For a broader discussion, see Pohl, Gantner and Payne (eds.), *Visions of community*; Pohl, *The break-up of the Western Roman Empire*; Kennedy, *The break-up of the Abbasid caliphate*.

Empire dissolved, the new kingdoms that emerged were named after the *gentes* that formed the ruling military elite, the Ostrogoths and later the Lombards in Italy, the Visigoths in Hispania, the Franks in Gaul. These kingdoms could have been named after the ancient regions or the new dynasties, but the ethnic designation prevailed. Obviously, this was a way to reinforce the solidarity of the ruling group, although there were alternative forms of cohesion available. The role of ethnic polities in the dissolution of the Carolingian empire was somewhat less prominent, but still remarkable. Pre-existing ethnic groups (Bavaria, Alemannia, Saxony, Brittany) increased their political weight and formed powerful duchies, but did not fully replace the larger units. Other regional powers had regional (Aquitaine, Provence, Tuscia) or even dynastic (Lotharingia) designations. Meanwhile, in the Northern and Eastern periphery of the empire, new and mostly ethnically-named polities emerged: Kingdoms or duchies of the Danes, Swedes, Poles, Bohemians, Moravians, Hungarians or Croats.⁶⁶ They largely followed the model of the post-Roman kingdoms and were perceived as constituted by the respective *gentes*. One alternative was provided by the Normans who built on existing polities, without a consistent new ethnonym impressed on them (apart from Normandy), and they proved more adaptable to existing identities and political traditions, from the Rus' to England (which remained 'the Land of the Angles', England) and Sicily.

At around the time when the Carolingian empire crumbled, the 'Abbasid Caliphate also lost its grip on many of the areas it had once dominated.⁶⁷ Large parts of the periphery of the Caliphate were inhabited by ethnic groups: Bedouin tribes in the Arabian peninsula and in parts of the fertile crescent; the tribal world of the Kurds in the mountains to the North; Iranians, Armenians and Turks beyond these mountain ranges. Much as the late Roman emperors (and to a lesser extent, late Carolingian rulers), the 'Abbasids had drawn military units from these populations, which were often (although not always) drafted under their own commanders. The most successful of these commanders came to rule over parts of the caliphate, under the nominal authority of the caliph. The Buyids came from the Iranian tribe of the Daylamites and established their rule in Fars, later also over some Iraqi heartlands; the Kurdish Marwanids and Hasanuyids grabbed power in south-east Anatolia and in the Zagros mountains; the Hamdanids from the Bedouin tribe of Banu Taghlib governed in Mosul and later in Aleppo. Although the foundations of these polities lay in the military strength of tribal armies, these tribal/ethnic identities, as it seems, did not become politicized in the same way as in the West. Rather,

66 Garipzanov, Geary and Urbańczyk (eds.), *Franks, Northmen and Slavs*.

67 For an overview, Kennedy, *Prophet* 200–308.

with increasing success the new rulers tended to supplement their tribal soldiers with Turkish *ghilmān* mercenary units, which gradually weakened their tribal base. When the dynasties fell, the tribes that had made them great usually disappeared with them. Thus, the result was rather different from both the aftermath of the Roman and the Carolingian empire. That does not mean that tribes and ethnic groups played a minor role in early Islamic politics. However, further comparison may help to ask new questions and shed new light on both sides.⁶⁸ So far, one conclusion can safely be drawn: the formation of ethnic kingdoms in early medieval Europe, and the eventual rise of the modern nation in Europe, was by no means natural, or self-explanatory. We should not take it for granted, but have to look for explanations.

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Across the Hindūkush of the ‘Abbasid Period

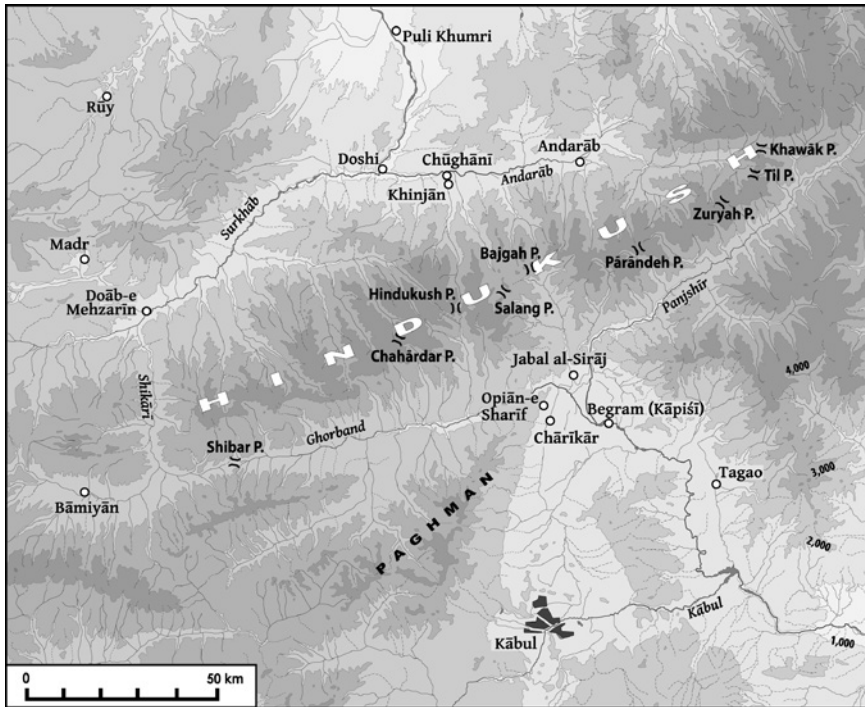
Minoru Inaba

The eastern frontier of the Islamic world remarkably expanded in the mid-seventh century and early eighth century under the ‘Umayyads. However, in spite of their triumph at the Talas river against the Tang, the early ‘Abbasids saw no great progress towards the east. The third wave of Islamic expansion only came after the political breakup of the ‘Abbasids in the ninth century, that is, with the conquest of Afghanistan by the Ṣaffārids, that of Central Asia by the Sāmānids, and finally the emergence of the Ghaznavids in eastern Afghanistan in the second half of the tenth century. The foundation for such dynamic movements, however, might somehow have been prepared in the previous period, namely, that of the early ‘Abbasids. This paper will discuss what the process was of the gradual extension of the Muslim influence into the region to the south of the Hindūkush of modern Afghanistan in the early ‘Abbasid period, examining some place names and mountain passes related to that process, as well as what can be known of the political situation there between the conquest of the Ṣaffārids in the 250/870s and the conquest by Alptegin in the mid-tenth century, based on the recent scholarship on the history and the numismatics of the area in question. Although available materials are still limited, it will not be meaningless to attempt to clarify, at this stage, to what extent we can reconstruct the less known pre- and early Islamic history and historical geography of this region.

Eastern Afghanistan in the Early ‘Abbasid Period

From the Mid-Seventh to the Mid-Eighth Century

After the murder of the last Sāsānid Emperor Yazdigird b. Shahriyār near Marw in 31/651, the Arab army, which had reached as far as Sistān in pursuit of him, carried out several military expeditions towards eastern Afghanistan. The region to the south of the Hindūkush was then ruled by the Kāpīśī kingdom which the Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang had visited several decades earlier. However, when the Arabs marched toward the north, the Khalajs, who were to establish their own kingdom in Kābul, were assuming power. Muslim sources tell us that the city of Kābul was conquered by ‘Abdallāh b. Samura around 665, but after only one year it was retaken by the ‘Kābulshāh’, who was no one but the Khalaj king.



MAP 1 Across the Hindūkush mountains.

The Kābulshāh shortly took possession of the former territory of the Kāpisi kingdom and became the ruler of the Kābul river valley as far as Gandhāra. In the 60/680s, a prince of Kābul fled to the south presumably due to a succession conflict and established his own kingdom in Zābulistān. The ruler of this new kingdom is known to the Muslim authors as *rtbyl*, which must have been a corrupted transcription of the Turkish title ‘eltābār’. These two kingdoms seem to have confronted each other at times, but also worked together against the Arabs in Sistān until the ninth century.¹ Thanks to the recent studies on the coins attributed to these two kingdoms, the history of eastern Afghanistan until the reign of the Kābulshāh From Kesar (r. 736 c.–745 c.) and the reign of the third *rtbyl* of Zābulistān has been partly elucidated.² However, from the

1 For the details of these events, see Inaba, Identity of the Turkish rulers.

2 As to the reign of From Kesar, see Inaba, From Kesar. As to a certain Khingila who is supposed to have been the successor of From Kesar, see Kuwayama, Gaṇeśa. Another proposal about the successor of From Kesar has been offered by Ma, Trilingual drachma. As to the early his-

mid-eighth century, almost concurrently with the 'Abbasid Revolution, we lose sight of the state of affairs in that region.³

The Expedition of Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl (c. 176/792–3)

The only record of an event obviously related to the area to the south of the Hindūkush⁴ in the early 'Abbasid period is the military expedition sent by Faḍl b. Yaḥyā of the Barmakids, then the governor general of Khurāsān for Hārūn al-Rashīd.⁵ Al-Ya'qūbī relates:

In the year 176/792–3, Faḍl b. Yaḥyā b. Khālīd b. Barmak, who was the governor general of Khurāsān under Caliph al-Rashīd, dispatched an army under the command of Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl to the territory of the Kābulshāhs. The rulers (*mulūk*) and landlords (*dihqān*) of Ṭukhāristān joined this army. Al-Ḥasan al-shīr, who was the ruler of Bāmiyān, also

tory of the *rtbyl* kingdom, see Inaba, Identity of the Turkish Rulers; Gyselen, Zāvulistān and Arachosia.

- 3 This may be partly because after the An-shi Rebellion, which broke out in 755, we cannot find much information in the Chinese sources, which had carried some invaluable descriptions on the Western Regions until then.
- 4 In this paper the plain which is located to the south of the Hindūkush and has been formed by the two rivers of the Ghorband and the Panjshīr is also referred to as the Koh Dāman plain, following Gérard Fussman. More precisely, it is the plain to the south of the Hindūkush, to the north of the low mountains to the north of Kābul, to the east of the Paghmān mountains, and to the west of the mountains which are the watershed between the Kābul river and the Ghorband/Panjshīr river (Fussman, *Monuments bouddhiques* 119; see also Map 1).
- 5 According to Clifford E. Bosworth, the expedition described by al-Ya'qūbī was actually the other expedition led by al-'Abbās b. Ja'far, sent by his father Ja'far b. Muḥammad when he was the governor general of Khurāsān in 171/787–8, and Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl made his own expedition from the south after he was appointed to be the governor of Sīstān by Faḍl (Bosworth, *Sīstān* 85–6). However, as far as I could discover, the chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr (13th century) is the only source which mentions the expedition of al-'Abbās against Kābul. On the other hand, two tenth century works, al-Ṭabarī's chronicle and *Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa al-Kuttāb* of al-Jahshiyārī, tell us that the expedition to Kābul was led by Ibrāhīm. In addition, al-Jahshiyārī says: Faḍl sent Ibrāhīm to Kābul. The latter conquered there and acquired a lot of wealth. Then Faḍl appointed him to the governorship of Sijistān (Jafshiyārī, *Kitāb al-Wuzarā'* 192). This may imply that Ibrāhīm was appointed to Sīstān only after his successful expedition against Kābul. As *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* gives the date of Ibrāhīm's appointment to Sīstān as 179/795, it is chronologically possible as well that the expedition in question was led by Ibrāhīm. Therefore, I will refer to this expedition as 'the expedition of Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl' in this paper. *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* also mentions Ibrāhīm's expedition against Kābul after he came to Sīstān. If we accept this at face value, there was another 'Kābul expedition' by Ibrāhīm after 179/795 (cf. anon., *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* 154–5).

participated in this army. They subjugated the town of Ghūrwand (madīnat Ghūrwand), the Pass of Ghūrwand (fajj Ghūrwand), سارحود, and سدل استان. Then they conquered the Shāh Bahār within which was enshrined an idol that was highly venerated by the local people. The idol was destroyed and burnt down. Among the cities of the Kābulshāhs, the people of کاهوسان and its ruler عمریکس, and the people and the rulers of مازران and مبرحد came to Faḍl b. Yaḥyā seeking the guarantee of their lives and properties, which were guaranteed by Faḍl.⁶

Though not long, this paragraph contains a lot of interesting points. That the rulers and landlords of Ṭukhāristān⁷ joined this army implies that, in all events, it crossed the Hindūkush from the north, to which the participation of the king of Bāmiyān and the subsequent subjugation of 'Ghūrwand' (present-day Ghorband) give support. Ghūrwand/Ghorband was and is not only the name of a town but the name of the river which runs eastwards along the southern fringe of the Hindūkush, and after joining the Panjshīr river,⁸ pours into the Kābul river.

There is much obscurity about the place names mentioned by al-Ya'qūbī. The 'fajj Ghūrwand' is 'pazh-e Ghūrvand' in Persian, meaning the 'pass of Ghūrwand'.⁹ Judging from the itinerary of this expedition, which was from Ṭukhāristān to Bāmiyān, thence entering the Ghorband valley from the west, this pass is identical with the Shibar Pass which divides the Bāmiyān valley and the Ghorband valley.

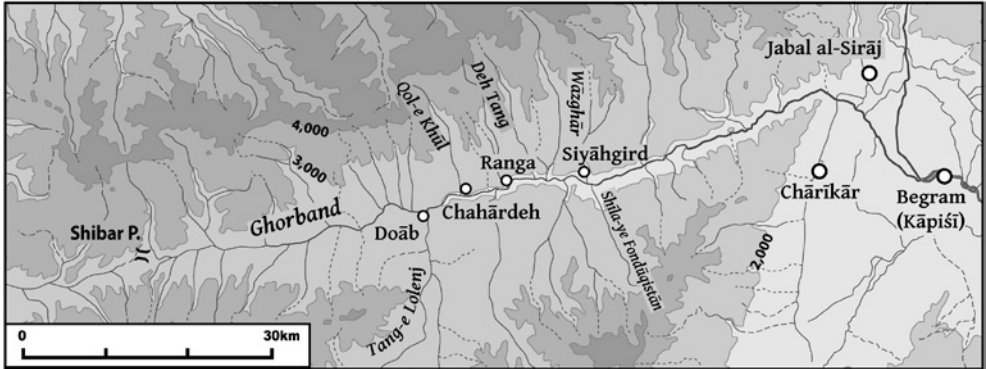
It is more difficult to identify the 'town of Ghūrwand.' There are a lot of tributaries of the Ghorband river which join the main stream from the north and the south. At present, some areas of level ground are formed at the confluences,

6 Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān* 290.

7 It is not clear who were *mulūk* and *dihqāns* of Ṭukhāristān. However, thanks to the Bactrian and Arabic documents from northern Afghanistan, we now know that there were local rulers at Rōb and Kadagstān (Baghlān) under the suzerainty of the Arabs (Sims-Williams, *Bactrian documents*; Khan, *Arabic documents*). It is also not obvious if the participation of local rulers in the expedition had any relation to the fact that the expedition itself was arranged by Faḍl the Barmakids who could have maintained some influence over Ṭukhāristān. See also La Vaissière, *De Bactres à Balkh*.

8 This river is now called Panjshīr, and the region along the river is also known by the same name. However, the river was called Panjhīr in the medieval period. Therefore, in this paper, the present place and topography are referred to as Panjshīr, while the historical place name is referred to as Panjhīr.

9 Cf. Marquart, *Ērānshahr* 280, where he suggests that Basghūrfand, mentioned in al-Muqaddasī's *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm* (Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm* 50, 296), is identical with this.



MAP 2 Ghorband river valley.

and towns and villages are located there (Map 2). For instance, at the confluence of the Tang-e Lolenj river with the Ghorband is the town Doāb, or Doāb-e Ghorband, to the east of which lies the town Chahārdeh or Chahārdeh-e Ghorband at the confluence of the Qol-e Khūl river from the north. To the east of Chahārdeh is the small town or village Ranga at the confluence of the Deh-e Tang river from the north. This town is on some maps called Ghorband. The 'town of Ghūrwand' might have been one such place.

As to the two place names mentioned next, even their reading is uncertain. Joseph Marquart is the only scholar, as far as I know, who has tried to identify, or at least explain, these two unknown place names. As to the former, he connects the place with Shaluojia (沙落迦), which is reported by Xuanzang as having been constructed by the prince of the Han emperor while he stayed there as a hostage.¹⁰ The second place name is connected by him to Jinizhawang Yandisa monastery (罽膩吒王演提灑寺), a monastery related to Kanishka, which is reported by another Chinese monk, Wukong, in the mid-eighth century as being in Gandhāra.¹¹ Both of his arguments are interesting but have weaknesses. Instead, I would like to suggest that the first place name may be an erroneous transcription of سیاهگرد, which lies to the east of Ranga at the confluence of the Wāzghār river from the north and the Shilā-ye Fondūqistān river from the south.¹² Along the latter river lies the famous Buddhist monastery of

10 Cf. Kuwayama, *Across the Hindukush* 200, 278.

11 Marquart, *Ērānšahr* 282–3.

12 Captain W. Peacocke, who was a member of the Afghan Boundary Commission (see below) and made a survey in the Ghorband river valley in 1884–5, records that the valley to the east of the Shibar Pass consisted of two areas, namely, from the foot of the Shibar Pass to Doāb and from there to Bāgh-e Afghān. The former was under the rule of

Fondūqistān, which may tempt us to identify the ‘Shāh Bahār’ mentioned by al-Ya‘qūbī with this monastery.¹³ However, according to the excavation report, there seems to be no trace of destruction or burning down of the site.¹⁴ On the other hand, Xuanzang in his description of the kingdom of Kāpiśī mentions two monasteries built by the ‘old king’ (Jiuwang Qielan 旧王伽藍) which were located to the northwest of the capital of Kāpiśī (the present-day site of Begrām, see below), on the bank of the ‘big river.’¹⁵ If these were around the place where the Ghorband river comes out onto the Koh Dāman plain, the ‘Shāh Bahār’ of al-Ya‘qūbī could be one of these two monasteries.

Another interesting point is that among the kings who came there to surrender is named the king of a place called ګلوسان. Marquart identified this place name with Kāpiśī/Kāpiśā.¹⁶ If this was the case, it means that when the Muslim army proceeded eastward as far as the mouth of the Ghorband valley, the local lords in and around the Koh Dāman plain came to surrender, which can be consistent with the possible location of ‘Shāh Bahār’ suggested above. Regrettably, we have no information as to whether the Muslims exercised a kind of suzerainty over this area for some period, or whether the Kābulshāh quickly retook control after the withdrawal of the army.

Parwān and the Routes to Cross the Hindūkush

Kāpiśī after the Eighth Century

As stated above, the control over the area to the south of the Hindūkush had been taken from the Kāpiśī kingdom by the Kābulshāh at the end of the seventh century. Though we know little about how this change of regime took place, it is assumed that a violent event, such as the destruction of the capital Kāpiśī, was not likely (see below). As a matter of fact, the name of Kāpiśī was still

‘Mīr Sulṭān, Shaikh ‘Alī Ḥākīm,’ and the latter was under ‘Īshān Sayyad Azīz Khwāja,’ who lived in Chahārdeh (Afghan Boundary Commission, *Reports* iii, 418). Deducing from this, among the place names mentioned by al-Ya‘qūbī, the ‘town of Ghūrband’ might refer to the town of modern Doāb or its vicinity, and the next two names could be in the eastern half of the valley.

13 According to Piers Baker, Ya‘qūbī’s *سدل استان* can be read *بندك استان* for “Bundukistan” or “Fondukistan” (Baker & Allchin, *Shahr-i Zohak* 22). Though we know nothing about how far back this place name can be dated, I think his suggestion is possible.

14 Hackin, *Fondukistan*.

15 Beal, *Sī-yu-ki* i, 67.

16 Marquart, *Ērānshahr* 280; cf. Cunningham, *Ancient geography* 23.

mentioned in the Chinese sources even in the beginning of the eighth century.¹⁷ Therefore, the hypothesis of Marquart to identify کاپیسی with Kāpīśī/Kāpīsā, mentioned above, seems worth considering, because it implies that at the end of the eighth century there was still a city and a ruler at Kāpīśī. Needless to say, the most important material with which to examine this issue is the last phase of the Begrām archaeological site. Roman Ghirshman described the last phase of the area he had excavated as the following:

La troisième et dernière ville de Bégram-Kapiçi ne porte pas trace de destruction; les quartiers dégagés par nous ne révèlent pas d'indice d'une occupation violente ou d'une prise de la cité par un ennemi. Bien au contraire, nous eûmes l'impression de nous trouver devant les restes d'une ville abandonnée volontairement par ses habitants fuyant devant l'envahisseur.¹⁸

According to his own chronology, Ghirshman saw the abandonment of the city as taking place at the end of the fourth century when the Hephthalites invaded this region. However, Shoshin Kuwayama has revised the chronology of the third period of Begrām and identified the capital of Kāpīśī, witnessed by Xuanzang, with Begrām III.¹⁹ Therefore, it is possible to assume that the abandonment of the city took place much later, for instance, at the end of the eighth century, and کاپیسی recorded by al-Ya'qūbī is the last appearance of Kāpīśī in the historical sources. It must be noted, however, that in the course of time the surface of the area where the site of Begrām is located has been levelled, and it is almost impossible to know the nature of the last phase of the city, as Fussman rightly points out.²⁰

The Appearance of Parwān

The name Kāpīśī and its like is never referred to in the Arabic and Persian sources after the tenth century, except for the probable mention of the place name by al-Bīrūnī quoted below. Other than Kābul, پروان / پروان or فروان, namely Parwān, is the only city mentioned to the south of the Hindūkush. The simple deduction is that the center of Koh Dāman plain had shifted from Kāpīśī to Parwān sometime before the tenth century. The Arabic geographical works, such as those of al- Iṣṭakhrī, Ibn Ḥawqal, and al-Muqaddasī, describe

17 Inaba, Nezak 192; cf. Grenet, *Regional interaction* 215, n.21.

18 Ghirshman, *Bégram* 41.

19 Kuwayama, *Begram* II and III.

20 Fussman, *Monuments bouddhiques* 156.

the area to the south of the Hindukush, especially of the silver mine of Panjhīr, which is to be discussed later, but they tell us little about Parwān. However, the tenth century Persian geographical work *Hudūd al-Ālam* describes the city as the following:

Parwān, a pleasant town and a resort of merchants. It is the Gate of Hindūstān (*dar-e Hindūstān*).²¹

What should be noticed here is the expression 'a resort of merchants' and 'Gate of Hindūstān'. No other place, except Bust in southern Afghanistan, is called as such in *Hudūd al-Ālam*. A similar expression is found in the biography of the Indian Buddhist monk Dharmagupta (sixth–seventh century):

The country is where the routes from the north meet. All the merchants from the northern side of 'Snowy Mountain' gather here.²²

This is, however, the description of Kāpīśī. Then, if we integrate the above two accounts, it may be possible that the city of Kāpīśī came to be known as Parwān in Islamic times. In the so-called Masson Collection, many coins with the mint name Parwān are included. Wilhelm Barthold and Vladimir Minorsky say that Parwān was in the vicinity of the confluence of the Ghorband and the Panjshīr rivers,²³ but as far as we can see now, it is the site of Begrām that is located near the confluence.²⁴ Let us examine the exact location of Parwān below.

Parwān in the 19th Century

Since the 20th century, Parwān has been a name of the province which roughly covers the western half of the Koh Dāman plain, with its center at Chārikār on the eastern skirt of the Paghmān mountains. Ludwig Adamec says that this Chārikār is the place where old Parwān was located.²⁵ However, A.C. Jewett, an American engineer, who was employed by Habībullah Khān in 1911 for the construction of a hydroelectric power plant at Jabal al-Sirāj, relates:

21 Minorsky, *Hudūd* 112.

22 Takakusu et al., *Taishō* I, 435a.

23 Barthold, *Historical geography* 23; Minorsky, *Hudūd* 348.

24 Richard N. Frye suggests that Parwān was the site of ancient Alexandria on the Caucasus, while he places Parwān in the vicinity of present Jabal al-Sirāj (Frye, Farwān).

25 Adamec, *Gazetteer* 639.

Jabal-us-Siraj, the site of the old city of Parwan, is just at the foot of the Hindu Kush and there are high white walls on all sides.²⁶

He further reports that he had unearthed the remains of the fortification, ceramics, tiles, a stone mill, a tombstone, cut stones, water pipes, copper coins with Kufic scripts, arrowheads, and a head of Buddha from the area where he excavated for the engineering works.²⁷ Based on these accounts, Warwick Ball and Fussman accept Jewett's identification of Jabal al-Sirāj as the old site of Parwān.²⁸

More than twenty years before Jewett, members of the Afghan Boundary Commission (or Russo-Afghan Boundary Commission), which had been organized to demarcate the boundary between Russia and Afghanistan,²⁹ conducted field surveys in northern and central Afghanistan, leaving meticulous reports. D.S. Timus, a member of the team led by Colonel P.J. Maitland, travelled from Narin on the northern side of the Hindūkush to Andarāb, then crossed the Hindūkush at the Khawāk Pass, and reached Chārikār. He counts the villages Tajikan, Deh-e Bala, Mianah Guzar, Matak, Shinwari, Harif Khel, Rasuldad Khel, Chinaki Pain, Khwajagi, Kamangar, Aziz Khel, and Ibrahim Khan as dependencies of Parwān. Most of these villages are still on both sides of the Salang river, which comes down from the Hindūkush and joins the Ghorband at the south of Jabal al-Sirāj (Map 3).³⁰ In the first half of the 19th century, Charles Masson described Parwān as being located 8 miles away from Begrām to the northwest by 19 degrees.³¹ From these accounts we can safely assume that Parwān in the 19th century was located where the Salang river comes out from the Hindūkush onto the Koh Dāman plain, namely at almost the same place where Jabal al-Sirāj is.³²

26 Jewett, *American engineer* 36.

27 Jewett, *American engineer* 201 ff.

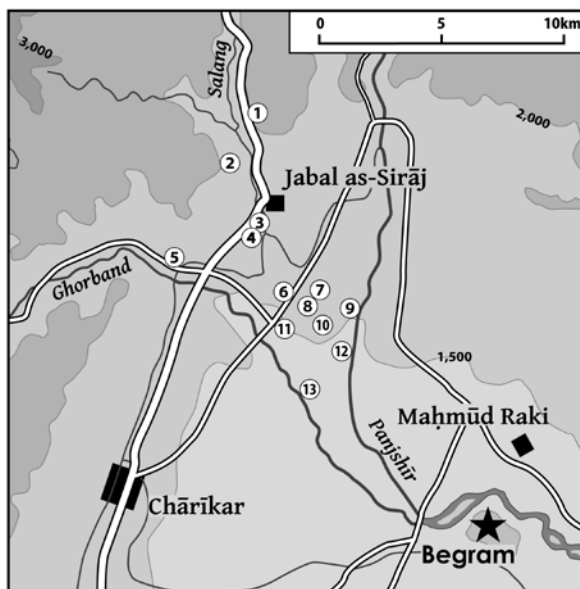
28 Ball, *Archaeological gazetteer* i, 131; Fussman, *Monuments bouddhiques* 173–4.

29 The Commission was organized after the so-called 'Panjdeh Crisis' in 1885. As to the details, see Holdich, *Indian borderland* 123–79.

30 Afghan Boundary Commission, *Reports* v, 331–2.

31 Masson, *Narrative* iii, 166. On the modern map, the distance between the Begrām archaeological site and Jabal al-Sirāj is nine miles as the crow flies, with the direction northwest by 27 degrees.

32 According to Elizabeth Errington, who has carried out an overall survey on Masson-related materials in the India Office Library, the reason why the Muslim coins with the mint name Parwān are included in the Masson collection from Begrām is that the considerable number of coins which Masson asked local people to collect through purchase are



MAP 3

Villages around Parwān.

1. Tajika
2. Deh-e Bala
3. Mianah
4. Munarah
5. Pul-e Matak
6. Shinwari
7. Harif Khel
8. Rasuldad Khel
9. Chinaki Pain
10. Khwajagi
11. Kamangar
12. Aziz Khel
13. Ibrahim Khan

PLACE NAMES ARE FOUND
IN THE MAP BY USDMA
AND КАРТА АФГАНИСТАНА

Parwān in the Pre-Modern Period

Nevertheless, as to the period prior to the 19th century, only a limited number of sources refer to Parwān. In 733/1333, the great traveller Ibn Baṭṭūta crossed the Hindūkush from Andarāb to Parwān via the Khawāk Pass and Panjhīr. Amīr Brunṭayh, a governor of the Chaghatay Khān Tarmashīrīn stationed at Parwān, controlled Kābul and Ghazna from there.³³ In the 13th century, Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn, who had fled from Khurāsān and combined with the remnants of the Ghorids at Ghazna, fought with the Mongol general Sigī Qūtūq Nūyān at Parwān.³⁴

From these accounts, it is obvious that Parwān was located to the south of the Hindūkush from the 13th to the 14th century, but the precise location of the city within the Koh Dāman plain is not known. However, going further back to the eleventh century, we find the key to identifying the exact location of Parwān. The eleventh century Ghaznavid officer and chronicler Abū al-Faḍl Bayhaqī relates:

included in the collection. As a matter of fact, Masson himself says that a lot of coins had been found at Parwān (Masson, *Narrative* iii, 166).

33 Gibb, *Ibn Baṭṭūta* iii, 586 ff.

34 Juwaynī, *Jahāngushāy* 194 ff.

1. The Amīr (Mas'ūd) left Kābul and reached Parwān, and stayed there for five days, hunting and carousing, until the baggage, impedimenta and elephants crossed the pass of Ghūzak. Then he crossed the pass and drank wine at Chūghānī.³⁵
2. The Amīr (Mas'ūd) was disconcerted by this letter, and ordered a reply to be sent in these terms: 'We have now set out, and are coming by the road through the Ghūzak pass. The wazīr should come to Baghlān and from there to Andarāb, where he is to join up with us at the stage of Chūghānī.' This letter had been dispatched by swift khayrtāshs. The Amir travelled along very speedily, halted at Parwān for one day only and traversed the Ghūzak Pass. When he reached Chūghānī, he halted there for a few days until the baggage and impedimenta, the armoury, the elephants and the troops came up.³⁶

The former is about Mas'ūd's journey in Shawwāl, 422/Sept.–Oct., 1031, and the latter is about the journey in Muḥarram, 430/Oct., 1038. On the maps made by the former Soviet army in the 1980s (*КАРТА АФГАНИСТАНА*), with a scale of one to two hundred thousand, and by the US Defense Mapping Agency, with a scale of one to one hundred thousand, we can find a village with the name Chūghānī on the northern side of the Hindūkush, on the Andarāb river, just next to Khinjān (Map 1). The present village is located at the entrance of the highway connecting the north and the south of the Hindūkush through the Salang tunnel. If the village already was at the same place in the eleventh century, which I think is almost certain, the description of Bayhaqī that Amīr Mas'ūd and his army travelled to Chūghānī from Parwān naturally implies that they crossed the Hindūkush at present-day Salang Pass (or Bajgah Pass to the east of it). Furthermore, the 19th century records locating Parwān at the south entrance of this route is consistent with these eleventh century descriptions. Consequently, 'Ghūzak Pass' mentioned by Bayhaqī must be identical with either present-day Salang Pass or Bajgah Pass.³⁷

35 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī* 378; Bosworth & Ashtiany, *History of Beyhaqī* i, 398.

36 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī* 738; Bosworth & Ashtiany, *History of Beyhaqī* ii, 238–9.

37 Bosworth, annotating this pass, points out that the place where Sebüktegin and Jaypāl the Hindūshah fought each other is called 'aqabat al-Ghūzak' in al-'Utbi's *Kitāb al-Yamīnī* (Bosworth & Ashtiany, *History of Beyhaqī* iii, 182). Actually, 'aqabat' is the Arabic word for 'a pass,' but it is unlikely that a pass in the high mountains of the Hindūkush was a battle-field between two armies.

Another great scholar of the eleventh century, Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī reads:

A river comes out from the mountain in the vicinity of the Kāyabish,³⁸ that is the kingdom of Kābul. That river, together with many branches of it, is called Ghūrvand, to which join the river from Ghūzak and many branches of the Panjshīr river at the confluence below Parwān.³⁹

At present, the Ghorband river first joins the Salang river to the south of Jabal al-Sirāj and then joins the Panjshīr near the site of Begrām. There is no doubt that 'the river from Ghūzak' mentioned by Bīrūnī is nothing but present Salang river, and Parwān must have been to the north of the confluence of the latter with the Ghorband.

Thus, from the eleventh to the 19th century, Parwān was at the same place, namely, at the mouth of the Salang ravine, where Jalāl al-Dīn fought with the Mongol army in the 13th century and the governor of Tarmashīrīn stayed in the 14th century.

Routes across the Hindukush

Another significant fact that the accounts of Bayhaqī reveal is that in the eleventh century the most rectilinear route to cross the Hindūkush, namely, the route along the Salang river, was used. In the beginning of the 16th century, Ṣāḥīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, recorded seven passes in the mountains, which were, from northeast to west, Khawāk Pass, Ṭūl Pass, Bāzārak Pass, 'Chief Pass (uluq kōtal)', Yangi Yol Pass, Kipchaq Pass, and Shibartū Pass.⁴⁰ Among them, the Khawāk Pass and the Shibartū/Shibar Pass are still visible on the maps: the former is the pass between the upper course of the Panjshīr river and the upper course of the Andarāb river, and the latter is the pass on the watershed between the Ghorband river valley and Shigārī/Bāmiyān valley. The third pass, Bāzārak, is on the route starting from Bāzārak on the Panjshīr river, and Bābur says that it is also called Pārāndī, as the route from this pass goes through the village of the same name. Actually,

38 The edition of the Arabic text, probably following Sachau, adopts the reading كایش. However, Florian Schwarz has rightly suggested to me that it can be easily amended to be کایش, which is nothing but a designation of Kāpīśī in Arabic. If this is the case, al-Bīrūnī is the only author who was aware that the kingdom of Kābul, which had been subjugated by the Ghaznavids at the time of the author, had ruled the area which had been called Kāpīśī several centuries before.

39 Bīrūnī, *Tahqīq* 192; cf. Sachau, *Alberuni's India* i, 259.

40 Cf. Beveridge, *Bābur-Nāma* 104–5.

now there is a pass called Pārāndeh on the route starting from Bāzarak, heading to the northwest and descending to Andarāb. The sixth pass, Kipchaq, must be identical with the Chahārdar Pass to the north of the village Ranga on the Ghorband river, because Captain Peacocke of the Afghan Boundary Commission calls the ravine along the Deh Tang river, which has been mentioned above, 'Darra-ye Kipchaq'.⁴¹ 'Chief Pass' is on the road which Bābur calls 'Parvān yolī.' It is almost certain that this pass is identical with the Salang Pass or Bājgāh Pass. Then the fifth pass, Yangi Yol, can be the Hindūkush Pass (Wāliyān Pass), which stands in between the Salang and Chahārdar passes, and the second one, Tūl Pass, can be either Til Pass, located to the south of the Khawāk Pass, or the Zurya Pass to the west of the Til Pass (Map 4).

To summarize, from the southern side of the Hindūkush, Bābur counts three passes from the Panjshīr valley, three from the Ghorband valley and one in between which follows the ravine of the Salang river, and in his time those three routes, namely, from the Panjshīr valley, from the Ghorband valley, and along the Salang river, were usually used for crossing the Hindūkush. Then, what was the situation in the period before Bābur? The following information, though not substantial, is what we can find in the sources.

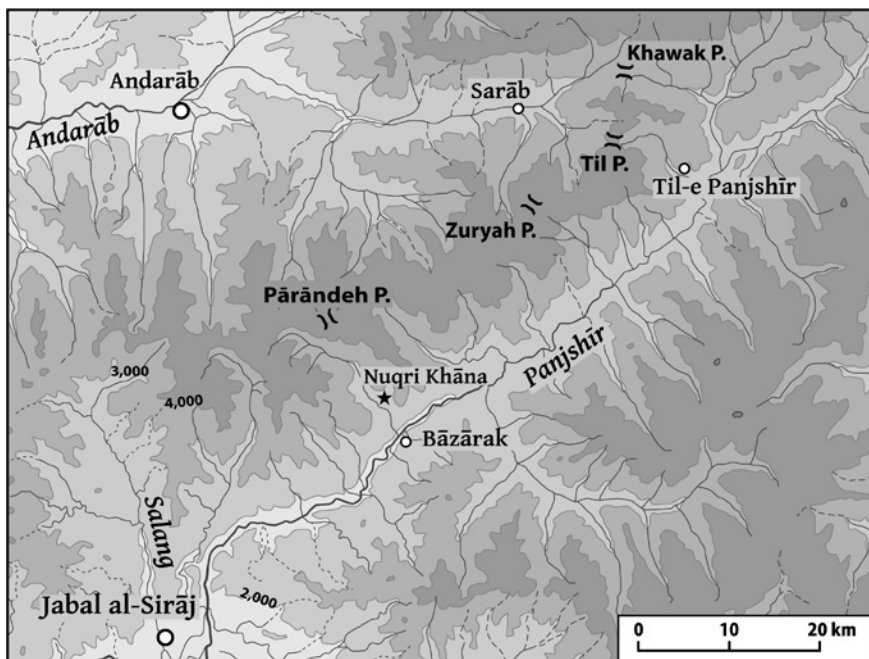
As to the routes through the Panjshīr valley, the oldest record we have is the travelogue of Xuanzang in the 640s. On his way back to China, he is said to have crossed the Khawāk Pass to get to Andarāb.⁴² The next appearance of this route in the historical sources is, as mentioned above, in the travelogue of Ibn Baṭṭūta in the 14th century.⁴³

Similarly, the Ghorband route appears first in Xuanzang's travelogue, as the monk travelled from Balkh to Bāmiyān, and thence to Kāpiśī, clearly through the Ghorband valley. Next, as seen above, at the end of the eighth century, the army of Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl entered the Ghorband valley by crossing the

41 Afghan Boundary Commission, *Reports* iii, 419.

42 The identification of the pass which Xuanzang crossed at that time has not yet been established satisfactorily. The identification of Xuanzang's Boluoxina Daling with the Khawāk Pass (cf. Beal, *Sī-yu-ki* ii, 286, n. 10) was probably by an analogy with the circumstances of crossing the Hindūkush in the 19th century. Boluoxina (EMC *bua-la-siei-na) seems, even if it was a result of a 'sanskritization' by Xuanzang (cf. Kuwayama, *Huichao* 136–9), very far from the word 'Khawāk'. However, comparing the itinerary of Xuanzang, who took a six-day journey from the villages on the border of Kāpiśī to Andarāb, with what is described by Arab geographers who, as will be seen below, describe the itinerary between Andarāb and Parwān as six days, this identification can be justified to a certain extent.

43 See below as to the case of the Banījūrīds, who issued coins both in Andarāb and in Panjshīr.



MAP 4 *Panjshir river valley.*

Shibar Pass. About eighty years later, Ya'qūb b. al-Layth, who conquered Kābul, marched towards Balkh via Bāmiyān through this route.⁴⁴ In the mid-tenth century, Alptegin, who fled from Khurāsān, also followed this route to enter the region to the south of the Hindūkush.

Finally, as to the Salang route, the accounts of Bayhaqī as quoted above are the first mention of this route. Then, Bābur described it as being very dangerous. Fussman, referring to Bābur, says that it is unbelievable that this route had been used frequently before the Salang tunnel was constructed and the road was paved in the 1960s.⁴⁵ As a matter of fact, the trip of Mas'ūd in 430/1038 was a rather urgent one because he had to deal with the intrusion of the Qarakhānid Böritegin into Ṭukhārīstān, and the route by which he could cross the mountains as quickly as possible must have been chosen. However, the journey in 422/1031 was for the wintering at Balkh, with the intention of checking the Qarakhānid 'Alītegin of Samarqand, which means that there was less urgency, based on their enjoyment of hunting and carousing on the way. Moreover, in

44 Bosworth, *History of the Saffarids* 107.

45 Fussman, *Monuments bouddhiques* 174.

both cases, they crossed the mountains with elephants. Therefore, it is likely that the route was used more than Fussman suggests, a hypothesis which will be reinforced by the points to be discussed next.

Across the Hindukūsh: Ninth–Tenth Century

Silver Coins from the Hindukūsh

As stated above, after the recapture of Kābul by the Kābulshāh in the 40/660s, the regions to the south of the Hindukūsh as far as Zābulistān had been under the rule of the non-Muslim rulers for about two hundred years. However, the 'Abbasid military expeditions from the end of the eighth to the beginning of the ninth century seem to have had a significant impact on the political setting of the regions. Abdur Rahman recently proposed the date of dynastic change at Kābul from the Turkshāhs to the Hindūshahs as being 822 CE, through the analyses of the inscriptions of the Hindūshahī period.⁴⁶ According to Rahman, as a result of the 'Abbasid military expeditions in the reign of al-Ma'mūn (r. 197–218/813–33),⁴⁷ the Kābulshāh (Turkshāh) might have accepted the payment of new tributes and taxes to the 'Abbasids. This could have increased the burden on the people in the Kābulshāh kingdom, against which one of the local rulers rebelled and inaugurated the new dynasty, that is, the Hindūshahī.⁴⁸

However, there is no doubt that the regions to the south of the Hindukūsh were still out of the Muslim domain. A serious change was brought about by the conquest of these regions by Ya'qūb b. al-Layth of the Ṣaffārids in the 250/870s. After the conquest of Kābul, Ya'qūb issued his coin at Panjhīr in 259/872–3, which is the oldest known Muslim coin issued in the southern fringe of the

46 Rahman, Lagaturman; Rahman, Zalamkot.

47 As to this expedition, see Ghafur, Two lost inscriptions, according to which the expedition was launched in 199/814–5. The defeated Kābulshāh had to surrender his throne and the crown to the Muslims, which finally were sent to the shrine of Ka'ba. Unfortunately, we don't have any historical details of this expedition, so we can't even decide from which direction the Muslim army marched to Kābul.

48 Rahman suggests that in 822, when the Hindūshahī dynasty was inaugurated, the last Turkshāh, Lagatūrman, was dethroned. He also assumes that the dynasty was not of Brahman origin, as had been previously believed, but from the Oḍi/Uḍi, an old family of Gandhāra, which would have been the origin of the place name Uḍḍiyāna and Uḍigram (Rahman, New Right). If the origin of the Hindūshāh was in Gandhāra, there could be some period of coexistence of the old dynasty and the new one.

Hindūkush.⁴⁹ Panjhīr was a town in the Panjshīr valley, but its precise location is not known.⁵⁰ According to al-Iṣṭakhrī and al-Muqaddasī, it was a three-day journey from Andarāb to Jārbāya, then one day to reach Panjhīr, and from there to Parwān was two days along the river.⁵¹ It abutted on the silver mine and was resided in by those whose lives were related to the silver ore. Almost simultaneously, on the other side of the Hindūkush, amīrs of Badakhshān, known as the Banījūrīds, or Abū Dāʿūdids, issued silver coins of their own, which continued until 293/905–6.⁵² Meanwhile, the coins with the name of the ʿAbbasids were also being issued at Panjhīr, but they might have been actually issued by the Banījūrīds.⁵³ In 293/905–6, the Sāmānīds began issuing coins at Panjhīr, which seems to have continued until 342/953–4. In his recent study on the rare type of coins with the name of the die engraver, Luke Treadwell has pointed out that the die engraver who had worked at Andarāb at the end of the ninth century moved to Panjhīr in the beginning of the following century and signed his own name on the coin dies.⁵⁴ Though the precise reason why this engraver moved to the south is not known, this proves that there was a flow of people, objects, and information between Andarāb and Panjhīr, and it is certain that the Banījūrīds played a significant role in such a flow.

In addition to Panjhīr, the Sāmānīd coins were minted also in Parwān in 292/904–5. Though the number of the coins of this mint seems to have been smaller than that from Panjhīr, it produced Sāmānīd coins until 365/975–6. Moreover, there is the Sāmānīd dirham in the name of Naṣr b. Aḥmad from Bāmiyān, issued in 309/921–2.⁵⁵ In short, the Sāmānīd silver coins were issued

49 See Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 6; Tor, *Numismatic History* 295. However, Schwarz suggests the possibility that Yaʿqūb's first issue from Panjhīr was related, not to the conquest of Kābul, but to his control over Balkh. As a matter of fact, this would fit the pattern of controlling the Panjhīr mine from the north in the following century, which is to be described below.

50 The only site of a silver mine along the Panjshīr river known so far is Nuqri Khāna in the mountains to the north of Bāzarak (cf. Ball, *Archaeological gazetteer* i, 195).

51 Iṣṭakhrī, *Masālik wa-l-Mamālik* 286; Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm* 346.

52 See Vasmer, *Beiträge* and Bacharach, *Andarāb on the Banījūrīds*. Schwarz prefers the designation 'Amire in Badaḥshān' (Schwarz, *SNAT Balḥ* 7; cf. Treadwell, *Craftsmen and coins* 37, n.70). It is not known when precisely the Banījūrīds began minting coins at Andarāb. While Richard R. Vasmer assumes that it was almost simultaneous with their coin issue at Balkh and Panjhīr (Vasmer, *Beiträge* 51), Jere L. Bacharach notes that the oldest coin issued by them with certainty is the one dated 883 (Bacharach, *Andarāb* 148).

53 Cf. Bacharach, *Andarāb* 147.

54 Treadwell, *Craftsmen and coins* 40–52.

55 That coin is included within the Máramaros hoard found in Hungary (Fomin & Kovács, *Máramaros* 20; cf. Rispling, *Ungarische Beiträge* 126). According to A.A. Быков, Безлдовский Клад, there also is one specimen in Bezlydovka hoard. However, it should

from Panjhīr, Parwān, and possibly from Bāmiyān in the first half of the tenth century. The locations of those mints roughly correspond to the three routes across the Hindūkush mentioned above.

Panjhīr Mine-Mint

Then, did the Sāmānids hold effective control over those places? Among the Sāmānid territories, Ṭukhāristān and the east and south of it were ruled by the local lords as vassals for the Sāmānids.⁵⁶ However, as to Panjhīr, we are not sure if it was such a place or not. According to the reconstruction of the political chronology of Andarāb by Bacharach, a certain Sa'īd b. Sa'īd had issued coins there in his own name before the Banījūrīd rule. Then the Banījūrīds came to control the town, probably expelling the predecessor. Finally, the Banījūrīds went under the suzerainty of the Sāmānids and governed the town on their behalf.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Treadwell, referring to Yāqūt's *Mu'jam al-Buldān* and al-Hamdānī's *Kitāb al-Jawharatayn al-'Atīqatayn*, describes that in Panjhīr there were riffraff who dug many pits in the mountains to make their fortune, consuming a lot of their own money, and when miners recovered ore from the earth, one third of it was taken by the government representatives, another one third went to the miners, and the one third left was for the local people. The miners and the people could sell the ore to the merchants.⁵⁸ Taking these details into consideration, Panjhīr as a mine-mint might not be a place where the issuing of coins in the name of a certain ruler indicates the close control of that government. In Panjhīr, the coins of the Ṣaffārīds and the Banījūrīds were issued together in 261/874–5. Then, in 263/876–7 and

be noted that a lot of imitation coins are included in both hoards. I especially thank Luke Treadwell for drawing my attention to the problematic nature of the so-called Sāmānid issue in Bāmiyān, and Nikolaus Schindel for informing me of the Máramaros hoard. Needless to say, I am solely responsible for what is stated here.

56 Regrettably we have little information about the relation of the Sāmānids with such vassals, except for the case of Chaghāniyān to the north of the Amudarya, for which see Bosworth, *Rulers of Chaghāniyān*. Although belonging to the previous period, the Arabic documents of the second half of the eighth century from Madr may serve as a reference. According to Geoffrey Khan, the people of Bāmiyān paid taxes to the 'Abbasid amīr in Madr who was located to the north of Bāmiyān. At the same time, however, those local people brought legal issues to the local ruler at Kadagstan, which means that there was a kind of double administration in Ṭukhāristān at that time (Khan, *Arabic documents* 19). As to the Sāmānid Ṭukhāristān, see also Marlow, *Counsel for kings* i, 62–92.

57 Bacharach, *Andarāb* 149.

58 Treadwell, *Craftsmen and coins* 43, 50, n. 134. Treadwell further suggests that those three groups could have been related to three kinds of coins with the different mint names (Panjhīr, Ma'dīn, Askar Panjhīr) issued simultaneously at Panjhīr.

264/877–8, the coins with the name of the ‘Abbasid Caliph and of the Banījūrids were issued at Panjhīr. The ‘Abbasid and Banījūrid coins were issued one after the other until 292/904–5, when the Sāmānid and Banījūrid coins were issued together. These may indicate that this city was not a mint firmly controlled by a specific state or dynasty.⁵⁹ However, in 303/915–6, the silver coins were issued with the name of the Sāmānid governor of Khurāsān, Aḥmad b. Sahl, and the design of the die was unified with that of the other mints of the Sāmānids.⁶⁰ The name of no Banījūrid appeared on the coins thereafter. Thus, the control of the Sāmānids over Panjhīr seems to have been more intense than before.

Bāmiyān under the Sāmānids

As to Bāmiyān, we know that there were rulers with the royal title *shūr*, which is attested by the Islamic sources as well as by the Chinese sources. This *shūr* derived from the Middle Persian **xšaθrīya*, just like the *shār* of Gharchistān, and the *khār* of Rob.⁶¹ The king of Bāmiyān who participated in the expedition led by Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl was also *shūr* (see above). Alptegin in the mid-tenth century fought with the *shūr* at Bāmiyān. Though it is not known if all of those *shūrs* belonged to the same dynasty or not, it is certain that local rulers had been in Bāmiyān since pre-Islamic times, and they continuously held the title *shūr*. As stated above, there is a possibility that a type of the Sāmānid coin was issued in Bāmiyān in the beginning of the tenth century. Though the example is insufficient to assume that any kind of political authority was exercised by the Sāmānids over Bāmiyān, we may at least suppose that there was no serious confrontation between two polities. Especially, that the date of issue was rather early may suggest that after Ismā‘īl’s victory over ‘Amr b. al-Layth, the former Saffārid territory could have been incorporated by the Sāmānids.

Parwān in the Tenth Century

Then what was the state of affairs in Parwān? Here also the Sāmānid coins appeared in 292/904–5, and the last of the series known so far is dated 365/975–6. Among those coins, the one issued in 334/945–6 has the name of a certain Aḥmad b. Yūsuf together with the name of the Sāmānid amīr Nūḥ b. Naṣr, and

59 Schwarz suggests that, because the person in charge of issuing coins had not been fixed, the names of the rulers were not systematically inscribed on the coins (Schwarz, *SNAT Gazna/Kabul* 6). Bacharach considers the similar situation observed in Andarāb as reflecting the ups and downs of the political control of the local ruler, in this case, the Banījūrids (Bacharach, *Andarāb* 147).

60 Treadwell, *Craftsmen and coins* 42.

61 Marquart, *Ērānšahr* 92–3; Sims-Williams, *Bactrian documents* 231.

the other one issued in 365/975–6 has the name of Naṣr. b. Aḥmad together with the Sāmānid amīr Mansūr b. Nūḥ.⁶² Judging from the names, these Aḥmad and Naṣr were probably father and son. However, it is not known whether they were vassal lords serving for the Sāmānids as governors, or governors sent directly from the Sāmānid court.⁶³

In 431/1040, after having been defeated by the Seljūqs at Dandānaqān, the Ghaznavid sultan Mas'ūd dispatched troops under the command of the prince Mawdūd to Hupyān and Parwān to defend the heartland of the empire against the possible intrusion of the Seljūqs.⁶⁴ On that occasion, Parwān was considered to be a defensive base on the front against the enemy in the north. On the contrary, as seen above, in the first half of the eighth/14th century, the governor of Chaghatay Khān stayed at Parwān to control the region to the south.⁶⁵ In

62 Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 64.

63 It deserves special mention that on the coin issued in 365/975–6 at Parwān is read 'min mā' amara bihi al- amīr Naṣr b. Aḥmad maulā amīr al-mu'minīn.' That the Naṣr b. Aḥmad inscribed here is not the Sāmānid ruler with the same name has been already noted by Schwarz (Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 64, n. 12). Among the Sāmānids, the title 'amīr' was usually used only by the members of the royal family, and the people under them seldom assumed this title. Then, that a person other than the Sāmānid ruler is called 'maulā amīr al-mu'minīn' can imply that this person was not the immediate retainer of the Sāmānid amīr but a local ruler of the vassal state. However, it is rather difficult to distinguish the immediate retainers from the vassal local rulers, whose names are on the Sāmānid coins (cf. Hennequin, *Grandes monnaies* 154–5).

64 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī* 885; Bosworth & Ashtiany, *History of Beyhaqi* ii, 356.

65 It should also be noted that this location of the governor of the Chaghatay Khānate could be related to the political unstableness of eastern Afghanistan from the second half of the seventh/13th century. A group of Mongols called Nikūdārīyān (or Qaraunas) had settled there and raided southern Iran and northwestern India. Although they entered under the rule of the Chaghatay Khānate at the end of the seventh/13th century, some of them were unwilling to be ruled by Qutlugh Khwāja and Dā'ud Khwāja, who had been sent by the Chaghatay Khān. In 712/1312, Timūr Kūrgān, who was one of the military leaders of the Nikūdārīyān, conspired with the Ilkhāns and expelled Dā'ud Khwāja. Against Timūr Kūrgān, Chaghatay Khān Esen Buqa sent an army with his brother Qebeq and Yasawul, who was a descendant of Buri. Soon, Yasawul broke off with the Chaghatay Khānate and went over to the Ilkhāns. On getting the command over the Nikūdārīyān, he killed Amīr Ghūrī and Timūr Kūrgān, who were insubordinate to him. However, Yasawul himself was also killed, in 720/1320–1, at the battle with the Chaghatay Khānate and the Ilkhāns (Kitagawa, *Nikūdārī Tribes*; cf. Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-e Ūljāyū* 201–2; Sayfī, *Tārīkh-nāma* 604, 671, 679, 760ff.). Although thereafter no information is available as to the condition of the Nikūdārīyān in eastern Afghanistan, it is highly possible that some uncontrollable and disobedient Nikūdārīyān were around Ghazna, which had been one of their strongholds. Curiously, however, Ibn Baṭṭūta gives no mention of those people, though he

this case, Parwān was a kind of bridgehead for the power based on the northern side of the mountains. To make this possible geographically and militarily, it may have been necessary that a connection between Parwān and the north of the mountains was guaranteed, for which the main routes for crossing the Hindūkush must have been kept under the secure control of the power ruling Parwān. Regrettably, we don't know the extent of the control of the Chaghatay Khānate over the routes crossing the Hindūkush, but as to the case of the Sāmānids, we do know they were able to control them, at least to some degree. If Bāmiyān was under the suzerainty of, or in the amicable relation with, the Sāmānids, the Ghorband route could be secured. The Panjshīr route also was available for the Sāmānids, even if through the Banjūrīds. As to the third one, the Salang route, if it had been used even before the Ghaznavid period, it would have also been utilized by the Sāmānids to maintain their influence over Parwān, and even if it had not been used, then the Sāmānids could secure Parwān from the east and the west through the Ghorband and the Panjshīr valleys. In any case, we can view the Sāmānid coins issued at Parwān in the tenth century as indicating that the town was on the southernmost edge of the Sāmānid sphere of influence.

Coexistence with the Hindūshāh?

Who Possessed Kābul?

At this point what we should consider is the Hindūshāhs, against whom Alptegin fought in the beginning of the 350/960s. There is a possibility that the city of Kābul, which is only about 60 km away from Parwān, was under the rule of the Muslims through the first half of the tenth century, since it was located close to the Sāmānid sphere of influence mentioned above. However, there are some difficulties with this assumption.

First, if Kābul was under the rule of the Sāmānids after they defeated the Ṣaffārīds in 287/900, we may expect that some coins were minted at Kābul, but we have no such specimens so far.⁶⁶

met a deputy of the governor at Ghazna whose name was Mardak Aghā (Gibb, *Ibn Baṭṭūta* iii, 590). In any case, positioning a governor at Parwān may have been a kind of precaution of the Chaghatay Khān against turmoil in such insecure circumstances. As to Nikūdarīyān and Qaraunas, see also Aubin, Qaraunas.

66 However, this may be of little importance, since no coins with the mint Kābul are known until the Timūrid period. See Deller, *Islamic mints* ii, 971; Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 9–10.

Secondly, there is no good reason to doubt the accounts of Nizām al-Mulk which inform us that Alptegin, when he first appeared in the south of the Hindūkush, fought with the army of the Kābulshāh,⁶⁷ as we have a supportive account in a source almost contemporary with the conquest. Ibn Ḥawqal, who is said to have travelled to the east in 358/969,⁶⁸ witnessed that, as a result of the entrance of 'al-ḥājib' and his army into Kābul, new taxes were imposed on the local people in addition to the tribute which had already been imposed on them.⁶⁹ The 'ḥājib' mentioned here means Alptegin, who is called such by the author in the same paragraph. Unfortunately, Ibn Ḥawqal does not name the ruler of Kābul at that time, but the ruler who formerly had accepted to pay tribute and then had to pay Islamic taxes was most probably a non-Muslim, of whom we only know the Hindūshāhs.⁷⁰

Thirdly, according to *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*, probably around 285/898, Ghazna, which was still under the rule of the Ṣaffārids, was attacked by an army led by two Indian kings, whose names were Nāsīd Hindī and Ālmān Hindī.⁷¹ Rahman has reconstructed these names as Āṣata and Toramāṇa, respectively, and considers that at that point Kābul was retaken by the Hindūshāhs.⁷² In addition, when the armies of the Ṣaffārids, the Sāmānids, and the amīr of Fārs fought for the control of Bust in the first half of the tenth century, the Sāmānid army being stationed at Ghazna is mentioned several times, but Kābul never appears.⁷³ Though *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* gives an impression that the Ṣaffārids maintained a kind of influence over Kābul until 298/910,⁷⁴ the city never appears again in any Muslim historical sources until the Ghaznavid period.⁷⁵

67 Nizām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-Mulūk* 150–3.

68 Miquel, Ibn Ḥawqal.

69 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-Arḍ* 450.

70 Cf. Rahman, *Last two dynasties* 126–7, where *Majma' al-Ansāb* of Shabānqārā'ī (13th century) is referred to as having been extracted and recorded in Sa'īd Nafīsī's *Dar Pīrāmūn-e Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī* (cf. Nafīsī *Pīrāmūn* i, 20 ff.). However, the edition of the same source by Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddith, based on the manuscript of Yeni Cami, does not have the account of Alptegin's attack on Kābul (cf. Shabānqārā'ī, *Majma' al-Ansāb* 30–1).

71 anon. *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* 255.

72 Rahman, *Last two dynasties* 111, 114.

73 Cf. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* vii, 79–80, 211.

74 Cf. anon. *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* 259, 290.

75 There still remain obscurities in the history of eastern Afghanistan in the first half of the tenth century. What is most puzzling is the *fals* issued by a certain Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Ghaffār in 338/949–50, 342/953–4 and 343/954–5 at Ghazna (Hattori, *Khulba* ii, 17, v, 5; Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 26), which should have been discussed in my previous paper (Inaba, *Venture on the frontier*), but I missed it (my thanks go to Luke Treadwell for drawing my attention to this issue). Unfortunately, we have no other information on this person who predates Alptegin by a decade. However, Naoto Hattori suggests that the military

Thus, it is unlikely that the recapture of Kābul by the Hindūshāhs took place right before the coming of Alptegin to this region. On the other hand, the Sāmānid coins were issued continuously at Panjhīr until 342/953–4 and at Parwān until 365/975–6. As is easily understood from the map, between Parwān and Kābul lie only the Koh Dāman plain and a range of low mountains, which could not be a natural barrier between the two places (Map 5). Nevertheless, if we tried to integrate the data from the literary sources and the numismatic materials, we should think that for a period the Hindūshāh and the vassals of the Sāmānids confronted, or more likely, coexisted with each other over that plain and those low mountains. Though this may sound strange, it is understandable when we presume what the survival strategy was of local small principalities caught between stronger powers.

Coins of the Hindūshāhs

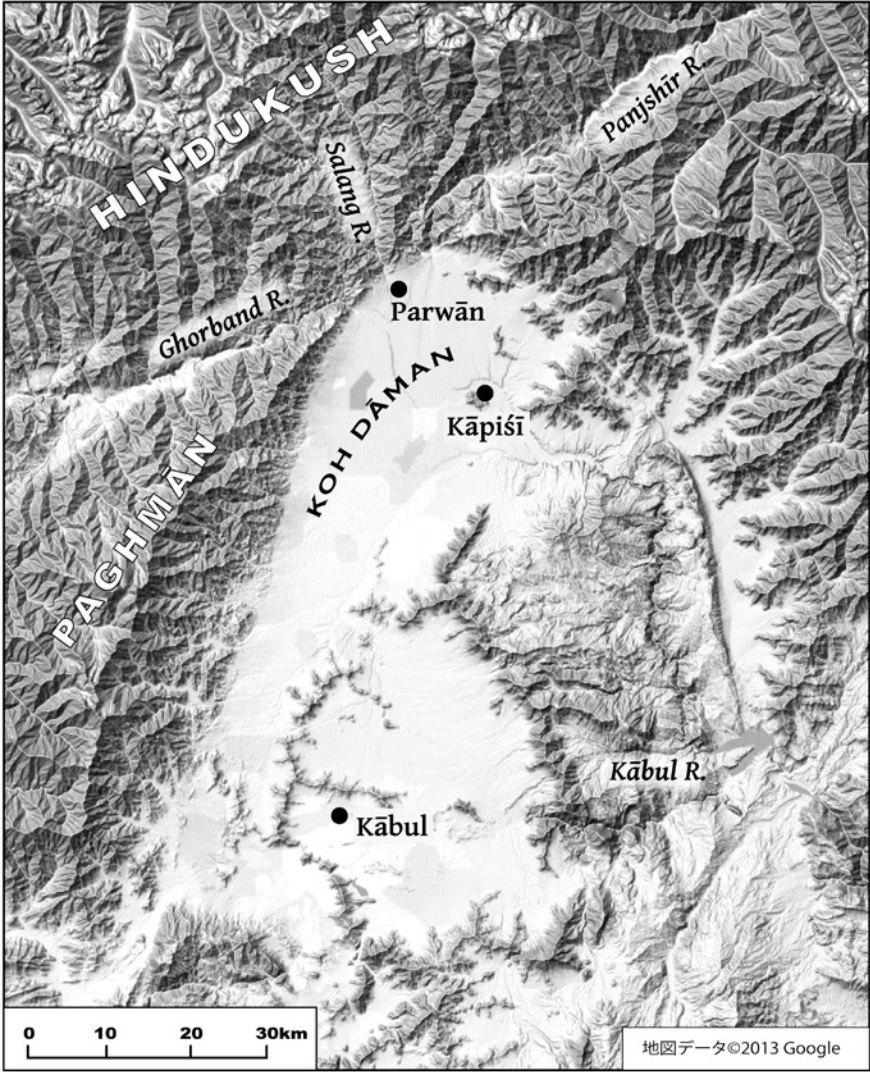
What can be related to this is the so-called ‘Bull and Horseman’ type coins of the Hindūshāhs. David MacDowall has given a chronology to those coins and has pointed out that the coins with the name Sāmāntadeva suddenly changed from silver to billon at some point, which he suggests can be related to the Muslim occupation of the Panjhīr silver mine.⁷⁶ However, Schwarz criticizes MacDowall’s assumption that the silver mine of Panjhīr returned to the hands

leader who defeated the Lawīks, the then local rulers of the Ghazna area (cf. Bosworth, Note on the pre-Ghaznavid history 16–8) was actually this Ibrāhīm, not the well-known Alptegin (Hattori, *Khulba* v, 5), which obviously contradicts the account of sources such as *Ṣiyar al-Mulūk*, *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb*, and *Ṭabaqāt-e Nāsirī*. Nevertheless, we also have brief mentions of Alptegin’s conquest of Ghazna in the almost contemporary report by Ibn Ḥawqal in his *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-Ard* (Ibn Ḥawqal 450), where we cannot find any reference to this Ibrāhīm.

Although we cannot so far identify him nor clarify his role with any certainty, if we try to interpret those materials consistently, there are at least two possibilities: 1) Ibrāhīm had been a governor of Ghazna on behalf of the Sāmānids (or one of the other Muslim states), who had issued coins with his name, just like the issues of Aḥmad b. Yūsuf and his son at Parwān (see above), but had been somehow expelled by the Lawīks between 343/954–5 and Alptegin’s conquest; 2) Ibrāhīm was, just like Alptegin himself, a political exile who had fled to the marginal area of the Sāmānid territory, and possibly had allied himself with the Lawīks.

In any case, when we acquire more information about this Ibrāhīm, the traditional description of Alptegin’s conquest of Ghazna, including mine, must be accordingly reconsidered.

76 MacDowall, *Shahis* 210. MacDowall suggests that this change of the material for dirhams happened at the end of the tenth century, which is about one century later than the Ṣaffārid seizure of Panjhīr. However, his chronology of ‘Bull and Horseman’ type coins starts with the inauguration of the Turkshāhs, which should be corrected by the recent



MAP 5 *Topography of Kāpiśi/ Kābul.*
BASED ON GOOGLE MAPS

of the Hindūshāhs at the end of the ninth century and continued to be under them until the mid-tenth century, based on the very fact that Muslim coins had been continuously issued from the southern fringe of the Hindūkush, as stated above. Schwarz further has pointed out that those Muslim coins issued

scholarship on the history and the numismatics of this region. As to ‘Bull and Horseman’ type coins, see also Tye & Tye, *Jitals* 32f.

from the end of the ninth century are smaller and thicker than other Muslim coins of the same period, in which the influence of the 'Shahi' coins can be observed. The same elements are also found in the early Ghaznavid coins issued from Parwān. Schwarz suspects that this was the result of the Ghaznavids' confiscation of the Hindūshāh mint at Parwān.⁷⁷ If this was the case, there could be a period in which the mints of the Sāmānids and the Hindūshāhs were even situated next to each other. The silver used at Parwān must have been brought from Panjhīr. As has been mentioned above, the ore unearthed there was not monopolized by the Sāmānids, but two thirds of it might be sold to the merchants, which could finally become available for the Hindūshāhs. If the governors Aḥmad and Naṣr, whose names appear on the Parwān dirhams, were local lords or notables, they could have offered facilities to both parties in order to secure their own position in between.⁷⁸

In the first half of the seventh century, Xuanzang records that Ṭukhāristān was divided into 27 small principalities which were under the suzerainty of the Turks.⁷⁹ Giving consideration to the topography of the regions across the Hindūkush, such political fragmentation must have been a feature of these regions throughout the history. As discussed above, the southern fringe of the Hindūkush was politically under the control, or at least under the influence, of the Sāmānids in the first half of the tenth century. At Panjhīr, such control might have been a bit stronger than at Parwān and Bāmiyān (see above). As for the economic context, the residents of Panjhīr could have sold silver ore to non-Muslims, and Parwān could have offered its mint for use by the Hindūshāhs. What this state of affairs suggests is that small principalities and cities which were located on the borderland and subjugated themselves to the suzerainty of the Sāmānids might have employed rather complex political and economic strategies to adapt appropriately according to the fluctuating geo-political situation and ratio of power between the Muslims and non-Muslims. The Hindūshāhs, who might have been less powerful compared with the Sāmānids empire, must have accepted this balance of power as long

77 Schwarz, *SNAT Ġazna/Kabul* 7.

78 Michael R. Cowell and Nicholas M. Lowick conducted analyses with Atomic Absorption Spectrometry on early Muslim coins (Cowell & Lowick, Silver), by which they proved that the silver ore produced at Panjhīr was chiefly used at the mints in Ṭukhāristān and in the southern fringe of the Hindūkush. If the same kind of analysis is done on the Hindūshāh silver coins, it will give us some clue to know if the silver ore of Panjhīr was used by the Hindūshāhs even after the seizure of Panjhīr by the Muslims.

79 Beal, *Sī-yu-ki* i, 37–8.

as the region to the south of the Hindūkush was not directly attacked, and this could have produced a kind of equilibrium in this region in the first half of the ninth century.⁸⁰

However, this balance was suddenly lost when Alptegin and his band, who had been expelled from Khurāsān, crossed the mountains in pursuit of opportunities, the details of which have been discussed separately.⁸¹

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80 For maintaining this equilibrium, the Hindūshāhs might have paid the tribute which is mentioned by Ibn Ḥawqal (see above).

81 Cf. Inaba, Venture on the frontier.

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PART 3

Religion



Columbanus, the Columbanian Tradition and Caesarius

Ian Wood

In the history of early medieval spirituality in the West the Irish *peregrinus* Columbanus plays a significant role, although it is one that is difficult to evaluate. There is no question that he was a great charismatic, a theologian and religious thinker, and a fine Latinist – far better than most of his contemporaries. There is also no question that he had a major impact on the spread of monasticism, especially in the area of North Eastern Francia.¹ Any deeper assessment of his influence, however, is difficult, not so much because of the evidence relating to Columbanus himself, but rather because of that relating to the religious and cultural context in which he operated. Scholars usually take as their starting point the statement in Jonas of Bobbio's *Life of Columbanus*, that in Gaul, at the time of the saint's arrival in c.590, "the strength of religion had almost been abolished, whether because of the frequent threats from foreign enemies or the negligence of bishops. The Christian faith, however, remained, but the medicine of penance and the love of mortification was scarcely to be found, or only in a few places" (*tunc vel ob frequentia hostium externorum vel negligentia praesulum religionis virtus pene virtus abolita habebantur. Fides tantum manebat christiana, nam penitentiae medicamenta et mortificationis amor vix vel paucis in ea repperiebatur locis.*).² Historians have seen in this statement an important reference to the introduction of private penance³ – and Columbanus certainly did play a role in the dissemination of the notion of penitentials – and they have also accepted the somewhat gloomy depiction of the Gallic Church.

At first sight this is reasonable: Gregory of Tours, who would die approximately four years after the arrival of Columbanus in Francia, offered an almost equally downbeat reading of his world, a picture that historians have been happy to take at face value, even though Gregory is also our main source for the explosion of the cult of the saints in sixth-century Merovingian Gaul.⁴ Indeed,

1 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* 121–51: id., Columbanus, the Frankish nobility and the territories east of the Rhine.

2 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 1 5, 161.

3 Brown, *The rise of western Christendom* 252.

4 Brown, *The rise of western Christendom* 154–65.

it is only too easy to see a caesura in the early 590s, with the immediately post-Roman world of the early Merovingians coming to an end with the passing of the bishop of Tours, and a new medieval world coming into being with the arrival of the Irish *peregrinus*. An equivalent break is sometimes noted in Italy with the death of Gregory the Great in 604. It is, however, a caesura which ignores the evidence of those contemporaries of the Gallo-Roman Gregory who lived on into the seventh century, for example the poet, bishop and spiritual author, Venantius Fortunatus, as well as a number of hagiographers, not least from Auxerre, which boasts a remarkable group of saint's Lives from the late sixth and early seventh centuries,⁵ as well as a notable amount of liturgical activity.⁶ Aunarius/Aunacharius of Auxerre was also interested in canon law, an issue which seems to have attracted a great deal of attention from the late sixth- and early-seventh-century bishops of Lyon.⁷

While not wanting to deny that Columbanus was a figure of considerable importance, I would like, however, to question Jonas' evaluation of Francia in 590, and to suggest that his description was no more than a tendentious statement, intended to display his hero in the best possible light. In order to do this I will not attempt to suggest that there were any religious figures in Francia in 590 of the same spiritual stature as Columbanus – although there were certainly bishops who made major contributions to canon law and its collection in precisely these years, not least Bishops Aetherius and Aredius of Lyon, who were among those who opposed Columbanus' monastic practices and his dependence on a discredited computus in order to calculate the date of Easter.⁸ I wish, rather, to direct attention to the continuing vitality of certain aspects of the Golden Age of Gallic Christianity, which is usually linked to the island monastery of Lérins, and to a string of major religious figures, culminating in the early years of the sixth century with Bishop Caesarius of Arles. Not only do I wish to stress the continuing importance of Lérins and of the influence of Caesarius, but I want to suggest that Columbanian monasticism derived much more from them than is usually recognised,⁹ and also that Columbanian houses, and especially Luxeuil, had an important role to play in

5 Goullet, Introduction 14–18; Heinzelmänn, *L'hagiographie mérovingienne*. For Auxerre, van Egmond, *Conversing with the saints*.

6 *Gesta Pontificum Autissiodorensium* 19, *Les gestes des évêques d'Auxerre* 62–85.

7 Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich*.

8 Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich* 79–82; Bullough, The career of Columbanus 14 n. 44.

9 See now Stancliffe, The thirteen sermons attributed to Columbanus 112–26; Brown, *The ransom of the soul* 187.

the transmission of Lérinian and Caesarian ideas. Much of the evidence that I will use was listed by Friedrich Prinz in his monumental *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich*.¹⁰ However, the stark structure of the book, with its emphasis on Martin, Lérins, the impact of the Irish, and the dissemination of the Rule of Benedict to Merovingian and Carolingian houses, rather overshadows the information it has to offer on the role of Caesarius.

One aspect of my argument, however, is well known. Historians of monastic rules have long been aware that the *Regulae* of Columbanus came to be combined with those of Benedict and Caesarius in the course of the seventh century.¹¹ Indeed there are three surviving so-called *regulae mixtae* from second-generation Columbanian foundations which combine two or more of these rules. In addition, a number of seventh-century charters also make reference to this combination of rules.¹² The period has even been seen as the Age of the *Regula Mixta*.¹³ Historians of monasticism appear to have made much of these mixed rules because they provide us with some of the earliest evidence for the dissemination of the Rule of Benedict. Rather less attention has been paid to the Caesarian element in the mix. Caesarius would certainly come to be seen as a lesser monastic legislator than Benedict in the course of the eighth century, but this was arguably not the case a hundred years earlier.

Caesarius' importance has been undervalued not only as a result of comparison with Benedict: it has also been undervalued for the simple reason that one of his major contributions to monasticism is usually assigned to the Irish, thus enhancing the scale of the impact of Columbanus on the continent: that is the notion of the monastic enclosure or *saepta*. The monastic enclosure certainly plays an important role in Jonas's *Life of Columbanus*, above all in the account of the nuns of Faremoutiers, which constitutes a third of the second book of the work.¹⁴ Moreover, Columbanus himself may well have first encountered the idea of an enclosure in Ireland: although there are no written sources earlier than the 590s to prove that the *saepta* was a feature of early Irish monasticism, archaeology suggests that monasteries in Ireland might have had enclosure walls, probably modelled on those of raths, from early in their

10 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* 263–92.

11 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* 76–84; Diem, *Das monastische Experiment* 249–72.

12 The apparently authentic charters are numbers 275, 350, 351, 596, in Pardessus, *Diplomata, Chartae, Epistolae, Leges* 40, 133, 134, 409.

13 Wormald, Bede and Benedict Biscop 4.

14 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* II 11–22, 257–79.

history.¹⁵ The enclosure was, however, unquestionably a feature of Caesarius' rule for nuns, although he does not use the word *saepta*, but talks rather of the *secreta pars* of the monastery, which is not to be entered by men.¹⁶ On the other hand there is no equivalent to the *secreta pars* in his Rule for monks. There are, however, equivalent clauses denying lay entry into monastic communities in a cluster of other rules related to that of Caesarius, including those of his successor as Bishop of Arles, Aurelian, and of the Bishop of Uzès, Ferreolus, as well as the *Regula Tarnatensis*, and the so-called third *Regula Patrum*.¹⁷ While the majority of these concern access to female houses, the *Regula Aureliani* explicitly deals with male communities. Moreover, even if the word *saepta* does not appear in these texts, it is used in the letter of Bishops Aetherius of Lyon, Syagrius of Autun, Aunarius/Aunacharius of Auxerre, Hesychius of Grenoble, Agricola of Nevers, Urbicus of Riez, Felix of Belley, Veranus of Cavaillon, Felix of Châlons-sur-Marne, and Bertram of Le Mans, relating to the rebellion of the nuns of Poitiers, and transcribed by Gregory of Tours.¹⁸ One might note that some of these bishops, notably Aetherius, would later have dealings with Columbanus. Since Radegund of Poitiers very specifically subjected her community to the Rule in force at Arles, even though the Abbess of the Provençal community had doubts as to whether the convent of the Holy Cross was capable of following its tenets,¹⁹ it is clear that the word *saepta* in the letter of the bishops describes what Caesarius had called the *secreta pars*. In addition to this narrative evidence, access to monasteries is limited in a number of conciliar canons, and in the case of the Council of Tours (567) there is an explicit ban on women entering the monastic *saepta*.²⁰ In other words, despite the fact that, according to Jonas, King Theuderic complained that the saint was ignoring the traditions of the Frankish Church (*ab conprovincialibus moribus discisceret*) in preventing Christians from entering the *saepta secretiora*,²¹ the notion of the monastic enclosure was already well established in Francia before the arrival of Columbanus, even if it was not in force in many houses.

Whether or not Columbanus himself promoted the idea of the monastic *saepta*, on the other hand, is unclear. Neither the word nor the idea ap-

15 Stalley, *Ecclesiastical architecture* 716–8.

16 Caesarius, *Regula ad Virgines*, 50, *Césaire d'Arles*, 236–7.

17 de Vogüé, *Vie de saint Colomban* 138, n. 8.

18 Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum*, IX 41–3, 467–75.

19 *Epistolae aevi Merovingici collectae* 11, 450–3.

20 Epaon, canon 38; Orléans V, canon 19; Tours, canon 16, *Les canons des conciles mérovingiens* I 118–21, 314–7, II 360–3.

21 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 19, 190.

pear in the surviving Rules of the Irish saint: but the word *saepta* is used by Jonas to describe the monastic zone at Luxeuil,²² as well as at Bobbio,²³ and at Remiremont.²⁴ It is also used in the section of the *Vita Columbani* dealing with Faremoutiers,²⁵ which concerns a second-generation Columbanian foundation, and a female house at that. Historians, however, have tended to read the famous account in Jonas of the confrontation between Columbanus and king Theuderic, over the question of the accessibility of parts of the monastery to laymen, with the notion of an obvious enclosure wall in mind. The saint tells the king that he is not in the habit of giving laymen access to the living quarters of the servants of God (*ut saecularium hominum et relegione alienis famulorum Dei habitationes pandunt introitum*).²⁶ This is usually understood to mean entry into the monastic *saepta*, but Jonas is actually more specific: he says that the king had entered the refectory, *refecturium*. When the soldiers searched the *saepta* of Luxeuil to arrest Columbanus, we are told that he was reading in the *atrium* of the church.²⁷ That it is a misreading of Jonas to envisage a monastic space separated by walls from the outside world at Luxeuil in the early years of the monastery is now clear from the excavations of the site by Sébastien Bully. Far from the community being set up in a deserted settlement, it was placed in a cult centre, which had certainly been flourishing before the 590s, and was probably still so doing.²⁸ Columbanus was limiting access to specific buildings, and indeed he acknowledged that others were open to secular visitors: he had made ready appropriate buildings for the reception of all guests: *se et oportuna aptaque loca ad hoc habere parata, quo omnium hospitium adventus suscipiatur*.²⁹ At Luxeuil it appears that the Irish saint was not in a position to establish a firm enclosure. Thus, whether or not Columbanus had come across the idea of the monastic *saepta* in Ireland, we should beware of assuming an insular origin for its application on the continent, and since second generation Columbanian communities undoubtedly had access to the Rule of Caesarius, we might want to see the idea of the monastic enclosure at Faremoutiers and elsewhere as being drawn from Caesarian rather than Irish tradition. Moreover, Jonas himself uses the word

22 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 10, 19, 20, 170, 190, 191, 194.

23 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* II 5, 237.

24 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* II 10, 253.

25 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* II 13, 17, 19, 262, 268, 271–3.

26 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 19, 187–93.

27 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 20, 194.

28 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 19, 190.

29 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 19, 190.

saepta in the *Vita Iohannis* to describe Lérins in the late fifth century,³⁰ and he says that John created a *saepta* round his community at Réomé.³¹ The hagiographer may, of course, have been applying a seventh-century appreciation of monastic sites to a different fifth- and sixth-century reality: but for him, it is clear that the *saepta* was not a specifically Irish concept.

In considering whether Faremoutiers might have been influenced by the Caesarian tradition the supposed caesura between the world of Gregory of Tours and that of Columbanus does not help. The last image of the Caesarian community of the Holy Cross at Poitiers, founded by Radegund, that one sees in Gregory's *Ten Books of Histories* is scarcely uplifting, for it relates to the condemnation of the nuns of the community in 589, following their revolt against the abbess, Leubovera, Radegund herself having died two years earlier.³² It is, however, clear that the community recovered from the crisis. Venantius Fortunatus wrote a *Life of Radegund*, at some point after he was appointed bishop of Poitiers in 590.³³ A decade or so later a nun of the community of the Holy Cross, Baudonivia, wrote a second *vita*.³⁴ It would appear from Baudonivia's achievement that the nunnery in Poitiers had come through its crisis reasonably well. It may, therefore, have played a role in the transmission of Caesarius' Rule to ascetic circles in the north of Francia. And here the association of the community with the royal court, deriving from the fact of its being founded by the one-time queen, Radegund, may have been an important factor. The rebellion of the nuns that followed her death was led by princesses, and we have no reason to think that the house ceased to be a home for minor royalty thereafter.

Another possible point of transmission of Caesarian ideals is Arles itself. In the early seventh century the abbess, Rusticula, became caught up in the civil wars which engulfed the Merovingian kingdom, and which led to the elevation of Chlothar II: in other words, she suffered in exactly the conflicts which finally drove Columbanus from the Frankish world. A *Life of Rusticula* was written by the priest Florentinus of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux for her successor, Celsa, shortly after her death in 632/3³⁵ – in other words within a decade of the

30 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 4, 331.

31 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 3, 17, 330, 340.

32 Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum* x 15–16, 501–9.

33 Venantius Fortunatus, *Vita Radegundis* 364–77.

34 Baudonivia, *Vita Radegundis* 377–95.

35 Florentinus, *Vita Rusticulae*, 339–51: Riché, Note d'hagiographie mérovingienne: la *Vita Rusticulae*: Van Uytenghe, Le savor biblique du Latin mérovingien: l'exemple de la vie de sainte Rusticule, abbesse à Arles (VII^e siècle).

composition of the *Vita Columbani*, which dates to 642/3.³⁶ Although comparison is scarcely ever made between the two texts, Florentinus' is a remarkable work, and one that was long undervalued, because Bruno Krusch regarded it as a composition of a later period.³⁷ What the *Vita Rusticulae* shows is that the nunnery at Arles was still flourishing in the early to mid-seventh century. It also shows it to be a centre of influence, with strong contacts to the courts of Merovingian kings. We might, therefore, look to Rusticula herself as providing Columbanian circles with Caesarius' rule for nuns.

The identification of lines by which the Bishop of Arles' *Regula ad Virgines* might have reached northern Francia does not, of course, exclude the possibility that the text may also have reached Ireland before Columbanus' departure for the continent: it may well be that we have two parallel lines of transmission. It has been noted that there are apparent borrowings from a liturgy which was either that used by Caesarius and Aurelian, or one very similar, as well as from the hymns of Venantius Fortunatus, in the poem *Precamus Patrem*, which is now generally regarded as being a work written by Columbanus while still in Ireland, and which is preserved in the Antiphony of Bangor.³⁸ If liturgical texts from Arles and Poitiers could reach Bangor before 590, there is reason for thinking that copies of monastic rules might do so as well.

Murdoch Walker detected a citation of Caesarius in the *Regula coenobialis* of Columbanus, but regarded the sentence as a later addition to the original Rule.³⁹ Yet, although we cannot be certain that Columbanus himself knew either of the Rules of Caesarius, it is clear that he did know other writings of the Bishop of Arles: Walker identified two citations of the earlier bishop's sermons in the Irish saint's *Instructiones*,⁴⁰ and Clare Stancliffe has increased the number of identified citations to thirteen.⁴¹ She has also drawn attention to Columbanus' dependence in sermons on the so-called Eusebius Gallicanus collection, some of which are probably by Faustus of Riez, who is indeed cited by name in Columbanus' second Instruction.⁴² Clearly, Columbanus' Christianity was deeply informed by that of the Gallic theologians of the fifth and early sixth centuries. Whether, however, he originally came across the

36 Jonas, *Vita Columbani*, ep. to Waldebert and Bobolenus, 144–5.

37 Krusch, MGH, SRM IV, 337–9.

38 Stevenson, The monastic rules of Columbanus 210.

39 Walker, *Sancti Columbani Opera* 144, n.

40 Walker, *Sancti Columbani Opera* 70, n; 98, n.

41 Stancliffe, The thirteen sermons attributed to Columbanus 112–8, 200.

42 Columbanus, *Instructio* II, 1, 68–9; Stancliffe, The thirteen sermons attributed to Columbanus 118–26, 176.

theology of Provence while still in Ireland, or only after his arrival on the continent, is probably an insoluble question, given that, although we may have an early poem or two,⁴³ we lack the theological works that Columbanus wrote before arriving in Bangor, including a commentary on the psalms.⁴⁴

While the influence of Caesarius and his older contemporaries has recently been noted in the works of Columbanus, the same dependence has not been remarked on in the writings of Jonas. This is in part a question of the establishment of the corpus of Caesarius' works, which was largely achieved by Dom Germain Morin between 1937 and 1942 in an edition that was more widely circulated after its republication in 1953⁴⁵ – that is, shortly before, and just in time to influence, Murdoch Walker's publication of the works of Columbanus in 1957. Since the main editions of Jonas' works are both by Bruno Krusch, and were published in 1902 and 1905, it is no surprise that the hagiographer's citation of Caesarius has gone unnoticed. Moreover, the only significant new edition of the *Vita Columbani*, which is essentially a diplomatic edition of the Metz manuscript published by Michele Tosi in 1965,⁴⁶ made no attempt to identify patristic citations. Some redress was made by Dom Adalbert de Vogüé in his translation of Jonas: he noted a citation from Caesarius' Rule for monks, two from his Rule for nuns, and a further two from his sermons.⁴⁷ This, however, is unquestionably a considerable underestimate.

A key phrase in Jonas is *medicamenta paenitentiae*. It appears seven times in the *Vita Columbani*.⁴⁸ De Vogüé noted a use of the same phrase in Columbanus' penitential and in a letter of pope Leo.⁴⁹ What he did not note was that the phrase occurs regularly in the sermons identified by Morin as being by Caesarius. In fact it appears in twenty-four sermons, sometimes twice:⁵⁰ that is, Caesarius used it in approximately ten per cent of his surviving homilies. No doubt a full search will discover other Caesarian phrases in Jonas. It is, however, worth noting the full irony of this particular citation. For Jonas, what was lacking in Gaul at the time of Columbanus' arrival were the

43 Lapidge, 'Precamur patrem': an Easter hymn by Columbanus?

44 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 3, 158.

45 Morin, *Sancti Caesarii opera*.

46 Tosi, *Vita Columbani*.

47 de Vogüé, *Vie de saint Colomban* 259.

48 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* I 5, 10, II 1, 8, 15, 19, 25, 161, 170, 232, 245, 265, 273, 290.

49 de Vogüé, *Vie de saint Colomban* 55–6 nn. 21–5, 110 n. 1.

50 Caesarius, *sermones* 5, 22, 48, 56, 57, 64, 65, 66, 79, 89, 91, 101, 108, 109, 116, 119, 143, 178, 179, 184, 187, 209, 219, 235, I 28, 102, 217, 249, 254, 275, 277–8, 279, 281, 284, 327–8, 369, 377, 419, 449, 453, 486, 498, 588, II 723, 727, 751, 765, 835, 870, 939. It is possible that some of these sermons were not written by Caesarius.

medicamenta paenitentiae. The phrase, however, he seems to have borrowed from an early sixth-century Gallic author, whose works were plainly available at the time that Jonas was writing. This surely should make us wary of taking Jonas' description of the Frankish Church in the 590s at face value. Of course, the fact that he cites Caesarius does not, of itself, prove that there had been no major spiritual decline in Francia between the death of the Bishop of Arles and the arrival in Gaul of Columbanus – though, as we have already noted, Gregory of Tours should be read not only as a chronicler of decline, but also as one who witnessed the flourishing of the cult of the saints, while Aetherius and Aredius of Lyon point to a remarkable interest in canon law, and the evidence from Poitiers and from Arles, along with other houses, makes it hard to argue for a complete break in monastic practice – we will return to the state of the community of Lérins.

We can come a little closer to seeing the importance of Caesarius in Columbanian communities if we turn from Jonas to the manuscripts written before the mid eighth century that contain homilies written by the bishop of Arles – I leave aside the early manuscripts of canon law which seem to have originated in the circle of Caesarius, since they do not appear to impinge on the world of Columbanus.⁵¹ There are perhaps nine Merovingian-period manuscripts containing sermons of the bishop of Arles: of these two were ascribed to Narbonne by E.A. Lowe,⁵² a third comes from Soissons.⁵³ The other six manuscripts all come either from Luxeuil or Bobbio, or from houses closely associated with them. Thus two come from Luxeuil itself,⁵⁴ and two arguably from Bobbio,⁵⁵ and a fifth from St. Gallen⁵⁶ – and one might note two other early Carolingian manuscripts containing sermons of Caesarius which have been ascribed to St. Gallen.⁵⁷ The final early manuscript containing Caesarius' sermons is ascribed to Moutier Saint Jean, or Réomé,⁵⁸ a house whose abbot in the mid seventh century, Hunna, had trained at Luxeuil,⁵⁹ and whose founding abbot was the subject of a work of hagiography by Jonas, the author of the *Vita*

51 Mathisen, *Between Arles, Rome, and Toledo: Gallic collections of canon law in Late Antiquity*.

52 Lowe, CLA VIII 1105, IX 1330.

53 Lowe, CLA X, 1547.

54 Lowe, CLA II/VI/VII 173, IX 1396; Tewes, *Die Handschriften der Schule von Luxeuil* 150–3, 191–5; Grégoire, *Homéliaires liturgiques médiévaux: Analyse de manuscrits*.

55 Lowe, CLA III 394, VIII 1169.

56 Lowe CLA VII 917.

57 Lowe CLA VII 915, 953.

58 Lowe CLA V 664.

59 Bobolenus, *Vita Germani Grandivallensis*, 6, 35.

Columbani.⁶⁰ Thus, two thirds of the earliest manuscripts containing works of Caesarius come from Columbanian houses, or houses with strong links with Luxeuil or Bobbio. And one might add that by the end of the seventh century Soissons arguably had Columbanian ties.⁶¹ In terms of date, one of the Narbonne manuscripts has been assigned to the early seventh century,⁶² while a manuscript which has been ascribed to Bobbio or to Ireland has been dated any time in the seventh or eighth centuries.⁶³ That no Luxeuil manuscript of Caesarius is to be dated to the first half of the seventh century is not surprising, since none of the manuscripts ascribed to the monastery is dated earlier than 669.⁶⁴ It cannot be said that this is a particularly large haul, and indeed most of the manuscripts only contain a handful of Caesarius' sermons: on the other hand as a proportion of the earliest copies of homilies of the bishop of Arles this is certainly striking. There is one other point to be noted: among the sermons to be found in the Luxeuil and Réomé manuscripts, there are some that contain the phrase *medicamenta paenitentiae*.⁶⁵

Jonas' statement that the *medicamenta paenitentiae* were scarcely to be found in Gaul at the time of Columbanus' arrival is thus problematic – unless one treats the phrase as a reference to the performance of private penance as prescribed by a penitential. These manuals would seem to have been insular, British rather than Irish, in origin: but it is clear that Columbanus played a role in disseminating their use.⁶⁶ It is, however, highly likely that the practice of private penance was not a novelty⁶⁷ – and indeed Caesarius' sermons suggest as much. Moreover, as we have seen, the Caesarian monastic tradition most certainly did not collapse in the course of the sixth century. Jonas' image of a spiritual desert must be read as part of a strategy to elevate Columbanus.

We find another apparently dismissive reference to the state of monasticism in southern Gaul in Columbanus' day in Jonas' account of Athala, who would succeed the Irish saint as abbot of Bobbio. According to the hagiographer, Athala left the island monastery of Lérins out of dissatisfaction with its standards, and instead went to join Columbanus at Luxeuil.⁶⁸ It is hard to square

60 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 326–44.

61 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* 183, 193.

62 Lowe CLA VIII 1105.

63 Lowe CLA VIII 1169.

64 Tewes, *Die Handschriften der Schule von Luxeuil* 154.

65 Lowe, CLA V 664 (Caesarius, *sermo* 56); CLA VII 917 (Caesarius, *sermo* 235); CLA IX 1396 (Caesarius, *sermo* 187).

66 Charles-Edwards, *The penitential of Columbanus* 237–9.

67 Brown, *The ransom of the Soul* 126.

68 Jonas, *Vita Columbani* II 1, 230.

this statement with what else is known of Lérins in the late sixth century. The community seems to have been highly regarded by Gregory the Great, who corresponded with its abbots Stephen and Conon. In addition, the *patricius* of Provence, Dynamius, wrote a poem in praise of the island monastery during the same period.⁶⁹ One is left to wonder whether Jonas felt he had to criticise Lérins in order to justify Athala's departure from the community. Moving between monasteries was frowned on, except in cases where standards were so low that to stay would not be beneficial to the monk's soul.⁷⁰

That Jonas was misrepresenting Lérins, and that he knew as much, or at least came to know as much, is clear if we turn to another of his hagiographical texts, the *Life of John of Réomé*, the community which, as we have seen, boasted a manuscript containing sermons of Caesarius. John, according to Jonas, having founded his own monastery at Réomé, then abandoned it in order to undergo better monastic training at Lérins, which he was subsequently forced to leave, on the orders of his bishop, Gregory of Langres (the great-grandfather of Gregory of Tours).⁷¹ In an important recent article Albrecht Diem has questioned the historicity of Jonas' account of John, and suggested that the narrative is an invention.⁷² Whilst it is clear that Diem is right to see the *vita* as being essentially concerned with the depiction of a monastic life, and while it is also true that Jonas sets up a chronological impossibility by naming Honoratus as the abbot of Lérins at the time of John's arrival,⁷³ it would seem that the basic narrative is plausible if one simply assumes that the abbot of the island monastery has been misnamed. It is not difficult to accept that Jonas inserted the name of the abbey's founder, and most famous abbot, rather than one of the less known figures from the end of the fifth century. Regardless of whether the narrative is credible, in the *Vita Iohannis*, which was written in 659,⁷⁴ sixteen years after the *Vita Columbani*, Jonas makes it clear that he had a high regard for the standards of Lérins in the last years of the fifth and opening years of the sixth century. Moreover, he admits that John brought those standards back to Réomé, and by commenting on the cult of John after his death he implies that there was no diminution in the quality of monastic life at Réomé through the sixth century, and indeed down to the time of writing.

69 Gregory I, *Register* VI 57, XI 9, 430, 871–2: Manitius, Zu Dynamius von Massilia.

70 Columbanus, Ep. I 7, 8–10. See Gildas, *Fragmenta*, 4, 81, 144.

71 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 4, 330–2.

72 Diem, The rule of an “Iro-Egyptian” Monk in Gaul.

73 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 4, 330–1.

74 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis*, prologue, sch 326.

The Réomé manuscript of Caesarius (which also contains works of Chrysostom, Pseudo-Augustine, Gregory I and Isidore) belongs to the early eighth century, and thus does not prove that the community was reading the works of the Bishop of Arles in Jonas' day. But we have some reason for thinking that this was the case. In an expansive chapter towards the end of the *Vita Iohannis* the hagiographer provides a lengthy account of the spiritual ideology of the saint.⁷⁵ Much of this is derived from Cassian's *Institutes*,⁷⁶ but a likely additional source is the *Monita* of Porcarius – a short text of spiritual admonition written by one of the late fifth-century abbots of Lérins,⁷⁷ and arguably the abbot who was in post during John's sojourn on the island.

Porcarius has also been seen as a likely author of a small monastic rule known as the *Regula Macharii*, one of a cluster of rules preserved by Benedict of Aniane, and edited by de Vogüé under the title of *Règles des saints pères*.⁷⁸ Interestingly, Jonas refers to John's use of the *Regula Macharii*⁷⁹ – although, as Diem has pointed out, the citation in question seems to be of the *Regula Quattuor Patrum* (which also claims to have been written in part by a Macharius).⁸⁰ In fact it is possible that both rules were available at the monastery of Réomé.⁸¹ Whether or not this was the case, it is clear that John's foundation was a centre of Lérinian influence in north Burgundy throughout the sixth and early seventh centuries. And no doubt its interest in the works of Caesarius goes hand in hand with the link with Lérins: Caesarius had, after all, been a monk in the island community before becoming bishop of Arles. Indeed, he had been a member of Lérins during the abbacy of Porcarius, and may well have been present there at the time of John's short stay.

It would seem, therefore, that far from Francia being a spiritual desert in 590, the traditions of Lérins and Arles were still very much alive, and that they were present as far north as Poitiers and Réomé – there is, of course, a strong case for seeing the Vosges as very much less developed spiritually at the time

75 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 18, 340–2.

76 See Krusch 340–2.

77 Porcarius, *Monita*, ed. Wilmart, *Les Monita de l'abbé Porcaire*. For Porcarius, Delcogliano, Porcarius of Lérins and his Counsels: a monastic study: I and II: Heijmans and Pietri, *Le "lobby" lérinien: le rayonnement du monastère insulaire du Ve siècle au début du VII siècle* 45–6.

78 *Regula Macharii, Règles des saints pères* I 373–89: for the question of authorship 32–4. See also *Regula Quattuor Patrum, Règles des saints pères* I 181–205.

79 Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 5, 332.

80 Diem, 'The rule of an "Iro-Egyptian" monk in Gaul 8–16.

81 Dubreucq, *Lérins et la Bourgondie dans le haut moyen âge* 208–10. Dubreucq argues for a shift from the *Regula Macharii* to the *Regula Quattuor Patrum*.

of Columbanus' arrival, although we should not forget that there was at least one community of British monks in existence in the region before the establishment of Luxeuil.⁸² It would also seem that far from initiating a new vision of spirituality, Columbanus drew on the traditions of Provence in his own *Instructiones*. Whether he drew on those traditions in his monastic Rules is harder to establish, but a generation later Luxeuil and the houses associated with it were certainly aware of the monastic legislation of Caesarius. Whereas historians, in their search for the spread of the Rule of Benedict, have stressed the importance of Luxeuil in the development of the Benedictine tradition, they have paid little attention to the Caesarian, no doubt because the *Regulae* of Caesarius would not be so highly regarded from the Carolingian period onwards. But for a brief period, that is known as the Age of the *Regula Mixta*, Caesarius vied in importance with Benedict, and precisely in the Columbanian communities.

The combination of the Rules of Benedict, Caesarius and Columbanus is to be found in the seventh-century monastic rule of Donatus of Besançon, and it may underlie the *Regula cuiusdam patris ad virgines*, which has very plausibly been ascribed to Jonas himself. The Rule of Benedict might have reached Columbanian circles through their association with Rome, although Friedrich Prinz suggested that Lérins may well have inspired Benedict as well as Caesarius,⁸³ and one might well, therefore, look to Provence as the point of transmission. It may be that even the notion of putting together Caesarius and Benedict was first mooted in the southern part of Gaul. Whether or not that was the case, it is clear that Columbanus and his communities need to be seen in a significant number of respects as the direct heirs of the Provençal tradition, and indeed as some of the leading agents of the dissemination of that tradition in the North. We do not need to postulate a caesura between sixth-century Gallic and seventh-century Columbanian spirituality. The one flowed directly into the other.

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83 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* 264–8.

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The Rebel and the Imam

The Uprising of Zayd al-Nār and Shi'i Leadership Claims

Robert Gleave

Introduction

As has been well-documented, the 'Abbasid empire experienced a destructive internecine succession war (the so-called Fourth Civil War) following the death of the fifth caliph, Hārūn al-Rashīd in 193/809. Controversially, Hārūn had appointed his son al-Amīn as his successor, passing over al-Amīn's older half-brother, al-Ma'mūn. Al-Ma'mūn was awarded control of Khorasan as compensation and was supposed to remain governor there until al-Amīn's death. At that point he would, according to the agreement, become caliph. The solution may have appeared neat at the time, particularly given Hārūn's insistence that the two brothers swear to abide by the arrangement, but it contained the seeds of its own predictable failure. Al-Ma'mūn was left waiting for his brother to die; al-Amīn was always to be looking over his shoulder, wondering when his scheming brother might strike. They became inevitably estranged. Al-Ma'mūn ruled with increasing independence in Khorasan; al-Amīn declared his own son successor, and invaded al-Ma'mūn's territory in 811. Al-Ma'mūn's army forced al-Amīn's forces back, and after a siege of Baghdad, his army captured the capital. Al-Amīn was executed and al-Ma'mūn was, at last, caliph of the whole 'Abbasid Empire.¹

Al-Ma'mūn was not gifted control of the 'Abbasid empire following his brother's death. He had to earn it through the suppression of a series of uprisings, mainly Alid in nature. The most threatening was the rebellion led by Abū Sarāya in 199/815, who rose up in the name of Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'īl (known as Ibn Ṭabāṭabā), a descendent of the Prophet through his grandson, al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī. Abū al-Sarāya managed to establish power in southern Iraq, stretching from Kufa down to Basra and east to Ahwaz.² In doing this, he encouraged, directly or indirectly, a number of other uprisings. These include the

1 See, amongst other studies, F. Gabrieli, *La successione*; Kimber, Hārūn al-Rashīd's Meccan settlement; El-Hibri, *Harun al-Rashid and the Mecca protocol of 802*. For a general account of the events around the succession and ensuing civil war, see Kennedy, *The Early Abbasid Caliphate* 135–163. For the religious understanding of the civil war over Harun's succession see Yukesoy, *Messianic Beliefs* 59–80.

2 See Bosworth (trans), *The History of al-Tabari* 12–28 and Arioli, *La rivolta di Abu Saraya*.

rebellion of Muḥammad al-Dībāj, a son of Jaʿfar al-Šādiq (d.148/765, the sixth Imam of the Twelvers), who declared himself caliph in Mecca in 200/816. He drew back from this claim, though, when he realized the power of al-Maʿmūn's forces. Two sons of Mūsā b. Jaʿfar al-Kāẓim (d.183/799, the seventh Imam of the Twelvers) also led rebellions against al-Maʿmūn in the first few years of his reign. The chronology is not always entirely clear from the sources, but Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā (later known as al-Jazzār) set out from Mecca and captured Yemen from ʿAbbasid control. At the same time or a little earlier, Zayd b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim led forces which captured Basra. Zayd's movement was suppressed; he was captured and sent to the caliph's camp in Marv in Khorasan. The reports of Zayd's encounter with al-Maʿmūn, and then with his brother ʿAlī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (d.203/818, the eighth Imam of the Twelvers) form an important source for the rebellion of Zayd b. Mūsā. In what follows, I outline the theological issues associated with this rebellion, and position it more broadly within the spectrum of Shiʿi political opinion at the time.

Zayd al-Nār and the Burning of Basra

According to al-Iṣfahānī (d. 356/967) in his *Maqātil al-Talibiyīn*, Zayd b. Mūsā was appointed governor of Ahwāz by Abū al-Sarāya, and he joined the assault of Abū al-Sarāya's forces on the ʿAbbasid-held garrison town of Basra.³ Iṣfahānī records that he joined the rebel contingents of al-ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad al-Jaʿfarī (a descendent from Imam ʿAlī's older brother, Jaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib) and an uncle, ʿAlī al-Urayḍī b. Jaʿfar al-Šādiq, and together they fought the army of one al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-Badhghisī (or Bādhghisī), who was defending Basra for al-Maʿmūn. They put him to flight, encircled his army, and then "Zayd burnt the houses of the Banū ʿAbbās in Basra and because of this, he was named Zayd al-Nār (Zayd of the Fire)." There are a few reports which place his pyrotechnics in Medina.⁴

Al-Ṭabarī (d.310/923) adds detail to the story, detailing how the ʿAbbasid forces, led by ʿAlī b. Abī Saʿīd, retook Basra, and in the ensuing battle captured Zayd and defeated the forces of Abū al-Sarāya. Abū al-Sarāya himself was executed, and the event is recounted in explicit detail by al-Ṭabarī. His head and his body separated and put on public display in the ʿAbbasid camp and in Baghdad. Zayd asked for a guarantee of safety, which was granted.⁵ In the

3 al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Talibiyīn* 355.

4 See al-Šadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 259 (hadith no. 3).

5 Bosworth (trans), *The history of al-Tabari* 12–28.

ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā, a source to which I return below, Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq (d.381/991) records that “after the death of Abū al-Sarāya, the Ṭālibids were scattered, some going to Baghdad, others to Kufa, and some to Medina. Zayd was one of those who went to Baghdad.”⁶ The ʿAbbasid vizier al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl sought him out and imprisoned him, wishing to execute him. Ibn Sahl was dissuaded from this course of action, but kept Zayd in prison. He remained there until after the rebellion of Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī in 202/817, when the people of Baghdad expelled Ibn Sahl:

Zayd remained in prison until he was taken to al-Maʾmūn. The caliph sent him to his brother al-Riḍā who set him free. Zayd b. Mūsā Abū al-Ḥasan lived until the end of the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil and died in Samarra.⁷

If accurate, this would have made Zayd quite elderly. Mutawakkil’s reign came to an end with his death in 247/861, and Zayd is recorded to have been born soon after ʿAlī al-Riḍā’s birth in 148/765. There is the story about Zayd, as an old man, mocking Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad (d.254/868) the 10th Imam for riding out to present himself against the caliph al-Mutawakkil on a horse dressed for winter on a sweltering summer’s day. But the Imam was wiser, because the heavens opened and the others’ clothes were ruined.⁸ Zayd is reported as being contrite, though clearly, he had not felt any need to be respectful to the Imam. Zayd, then, may have been well into his nineties when he died. This is confirmed by a report from the Imāmī hagiography in the *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-ʿImma* of al-Sharīf al-Rāḍī (d.406/1015). In the report, Zayd sees the Prophet sitting with ʿAlī in a dream. The Prophet, after an exchange with ʿAlī, turns to Zayd and says:

“You will live the number of steps you climb in one year”
He counted the steps and they numbered over 90.⁹

⁶ al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 259.

⁷ al-Qādī al-Nuʾmān *Sharḥ al-akhbār* iii, 337.

⁸ Ibn Ḥamza al-Ṭūsī, *Al-Thāqib fī al-manāqib* 540. There is also a report that he lived in the reign of al-Muntaṣir, and was the caliph’s advisor (*nadīm*) (see Majlisī, *Bihar* xlix, 216). He reigned for 6 months only after al-Mutawakkil (*i.e.* until Rabīʿ al-Awwal 248/June 862).

⁹ al-Sharīf al-Rāḍī, *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-ʿimma* 44. The editor notes that there is a variant of the story, not attributed to Zayd but to Sahl b. Dhabyān in al-Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-muʾminin* ii, 502.

The report of Abū Naṣr al-Bukhārī (d. after 341/952–953) that Zayd was poisoned by al-Ma'mūn and is buried in Marv is not, then, supported by the Alid genealogical and biographical literature.¹⁰ Today there are shrines marking the burial place of Zayd al-Nār in Diwāniyya (southern Iraq), Birjand (Khorasan), Isfahan and Marv. For all of these shrines, the historical record is confused; if they have any connection with Zayd al-Nār, it is most likely through marking the burial place of his descendants, with the attribution to Zayd coming later.¹¹

Little is known of Zayd's life after the encounter with 'Alī al-Riḍā. There are reports that he had no offspring,¹² but the Alid genealogical literature lists numerous children, with notable descendants from his offspring also. Among his children (as recorded by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī)¹³ are Mūsā the Deaf (in Arjan, modern day Behbahan), al-Ḥasan (in Qayrawan), al-Ḥusayn (also in Arjan),¹⁴ Muḥammad al-Akbar (in Nishapour) and Ja'far (Abū 'Abdallāh, in Sirjan). There is also record of a daughter (Umm Mūsā), and there were clearly other children I have not yet been able to trace. Mūsā the Deaf (referred to as both Mūsā al-Aṣamm and Mūsā al-Aṭrūsh in the handbooks) has descendants of significance down to the seventh generation through three sons. Al-Ḥusayn, known as *al-muḥaddith* (though any hadith reporting activities which justify this epithet are not recorded) also has descendants recorded to the seventh generation through two sons. The descendants of Ja'far (who according to al-Rāzī was based in Sirjan) became *naqībs* of the Ṭālibids in Basra (namely, one Ḥasan b. Zayd b. 'Alī b. Ja'far) and in Arjan (namely, Ḥasan b. Zayd b. Ḥasan). Of course, the historical accuracy of any of these details is difficult to verify, but, importantly, they establish Zayd al-Nār's descendants as notables, who at times held positions of responsibility within the Shi'i community. The genealogy rehabilitates his descendants into the revered *sāda* class (Alid descendants of the Prophet), even though he himself has been received somewhat ambivalently by Twelvers.

10 al-Bukhārī, *Sirr al-silsila al-'alawīyya* 37.

11 An outline of Zayd's descendants, as far as I have been able to trace them in the genealogical literature, is given in the appendix.

12 al-Bukhārī, *Sirr al-silsila al-'alawīyya* 37.

13 al-Rāzī, *al-Shajara al-mubāraka* 100.

14 Correcting "al-Ḥasan" in al-Rāzī, *al-Shajara al-mubāraka* 100.

Zayd b. Mūsā's Relationship his Brother 'Alī al-Riḍā

Zayd b. Mūsā was one of the many sons of the 7th Imam of the Imāmī Shi'a, Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim. For the Imāmiyya, of course, one of these sons, 'Alī al-Riḍā, famous for his close relationship with the 'Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mūn, was designated as successor (i.e. 8th) Imam by the Imam Mūsā. 'Alī al-Riḍā's relationship with the caliph was complex, appearing to alternate between political alliance and competition. The episode of the caliph designating al-Riḍā as his successor has been much discussed in the secondary literature.¹⁵ Al-Ma'mūn's purpose in designating al-Riḍā as his successor may have been to appease al-Riḍā's supporters; he may have been converted to the Alid cause; or he may have wished to change the nature of the Abbasid caliphate. Twelver Shi'ite historians consider the caliph to have ordered the poisoning of 'Alī al-Riḍā, though this may be motivated by theological necessity (to maintain the narrative of suffering) rather than based on historical events. The reports of al-Riḍā's contacts with al-Ma'mūn in the Imāmī sources are quite detailed. Perhaps the best known source is Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq's *Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā* – a work entirely dedicated to recording the sayings and actions of 'Alī al-Riḍā.

The stories relating to Zayd al-Nār in the *Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā* are found in a single chapter, forming the most important single source for Zayd in early Muslim literature. Al-Ṣadūq titles the chapter "What al-Riḍā said to his brother Zayd b. Mūsā when he was bragging in [al-Riḍā's] *majlis*, and what he said about one of the Ahl al-Bayt who harms the Shi'a and ceases to fear [God]."¹⁶ It contains 11 lengthy reports, numbered in the printed edition. The first four and the sixth concern Zayd al-Nār directly; the fifth and the remaining reports (7–11) talk of how members of the Ahl al-Bayt in general (without any explicit mention of Zayd b. Mūsā) are, like other members of the Shi'a, liable for punishment for their transgressions (contra those who argue for the Ahl al-Bayt's innate sinlessness and exemption from punishment). The reports in the chapter are, therefore, ordered first by reference to Zayd b. Mūsā, and then later by reference to the general doctrine of the Ahl al-Bayt's liability for their mistakes, which is raised by the Zayd case. The chapter is part of a wider discussion of the theological doctrine concerning the nature of the Imams, and more broadly the Ahl al-Bayt; the reports need to be read with this overall objective in mind.

15 The most recent discussions include: Bayhom-Daou, Al-Ma'mūn's alleged apocalyptic beliefs; Buyukkara, al-Ma'mūn's choice of 'Alī al-Riḍā as his heir; Tor, An historiographical re-examination; Ḥasan al-Amīn, *al-Riḍā wa-l-Ma'mūn wa-wilāyat al-'ahd*; Yücesoy, *Messianic beliefs* 91–96.

16 al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn* i, 257–262.

Turning to the reports concerning Zayd, the first three reports are not in any explicit chronological order; the fourth is a variant of the first, and the sixth conveys the same message as the first, but is presented as a monologue from the Imam directed at Zayd. Reports 1, 4 and 6 all record the Imam's criticisms of Zayd and his behaviour. The three reports convey slightly different, though not necessarily contradictory, messages about the proper assessment of Zayd's behaviour.

In Report 1,¹⁷ Zayd enters the *majlis* of the Imam at an unspecified time, boasting to all about his membership of the Ahl al-Bayt ("He was bragging to a group within the *majlis* saying "we are this and we are that"). When this event occurred is not signalled explicitly in the text, though the reader would probably understand it as taking place before Zayd's burning of the 'Abbasid houses in Basra. This is not only due to the report's location at the head of the chapter, but also Zayd being sent in disgrace from al-Ma'mūn to the Imam does not seem the natural backdrop to him bragging (*iftikhār*) in al-Riḍā's *majlis*. Zayd b. Mūsā, it is implied, was a wayward character from an early age, and this character flaw might help explain his subsequent actions.

‘Alī al-Riḍā publicly rebukes Zayd for bragging:

Has what the storytellers of Kufa (*nāqilī al-Kūfa*) said made you so proud? [They say,] "Fatima remained chaste so that God might preserve her offspring from the fire", but this referred to none other than al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and any other child of hers alone. Mūsā b. Ja'far [our father] was obedient to God, fasting all day and staying up all night. You, on the other hand, are disobedient – then [do you think] you [and he] will come to the Day of Resurrection as equals? [Do you think] that you are greater in the eyes of God than he is?

The word "descendants" or "offspring" (*dhariya*) here is understood by al-Riḍā to mean Fāṭima's children only (namely al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn explicitly, though her daughters also). These people are protected from Hellfire on account of Fatima's chastity. After them, all others (Mūsā al-Kāzim included) must earn their protection through piety and religious observance. Zayd seems to think he can behave how he likes, and that he is protected from punishment by simple membership of the Ahl al-Bayt. Al-Riḍā wishes to put him right, explaining he enjoys no such protection.

Al-Riḍā's position is underpinned by what might be called a "restricted" notion of the post-Ḥusayn Imams' charisma. The special position of al-Ḥasan and

17 al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn* ii, 257–8.

al-Ḥusayn is preserved through their direct association with Imam ‘Alī and Fāṭima (and, through them, to the Prophet himself). They were, collectively, the “People of the Cloak” and therefore have a different basis for their charisma. The later Imams deserved the *imāma* not simply by being amongst the Prophet’s descendants; their worthiness came from this combined with their religious devotion. Such a portrayal appears, at first at least, closer to the mature Zaydī conception of the imamate, and certainly reflects a certain rollback from the “excessive” (*ghālī*) claims concerning the Imams and their cosmic role and religious function.¹⁸

In fact, as the report relates, the Ahl al-Bayt are held more accountable for their actions than the rest of the people: “‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn [the fourth Imam] used to say, ‘For our good deeds, we get two rewards, and for our bad deeds we get two punishments.’” This chimes with the aforementioned discussion of the remit of the term *dhariya*. The Ahl al-Bayt, then, are to be judged (and their good and bad deeds weighed) just like the rest of humankind, but for them the stakes are higher. They risk greater punishment if they sin, and gain greater reward for their good acts. Clearly the Ahl al-Bayt’s status is dependent not merely on their lineage, but must be combined with faithfulness and devotion.

To illustrate this, the Imam refers, in an aside to al-Ḥasan al-Washā’ (the transmitter of the report), to a Quranic verse:

He turned to me and said, “al-Hasan, how do you read this verse: “O Noah, he is not one of your family (*min ahlika*) – it is an unrighteous deed.” (Q 11:46).’

I said, “There are those who read it “[He is not one of your family.] It is an unrighteous deed.”

There are those who read it “[He is not one of your family]; such that he has performed an unrighteous deed.”

And there are those who read it “[He is not one of your family.] He had performed an unrighteous deed.”

So he was already ostracised from his father.

All three of the possible readings give the impression that Noah’s son was excluded from Noah’s family (*ahl*) before he performed his unrighteous deed (namely, not obeying Noah’s call to join him and instead retreating to a mountain top). However the Imam wishes to emphasise that it is the rejection of

18 On the varying interpretations of the Imam and his religious role, see Amir-Moezzi, *Le guide divin*.

Noah's call which led to him being ostracised – that is, unrighteous deeds can lead to a loss of any privilege gained through lineage:

[The Imam] said, "Certainly not! He was his son, but when he disobeyed God, he was ostracised from his father. In the same way, he who is one of us [*i.e.* the Ahl al-Bayt] and does not obey God, then he is not one of us. You, if you obey God, then you are one of us, the Ahl al-Bayt."

The Imam is saying to al-Ḥasan al-Washā' (who was not a descendent of the Prophet) that through total obedience to God, he too can become one of the Ahl al-Bayt. The Ahl al-Bayt appears to be a community of the righteous, rather than a group of people privileged by Prophetic lineage. "The People of the House" becomes, then, synonymous with the Shī'a, as piety is given precedence over biological connection.

The Imam's public rebuke recorded in this first report is presented as a humiliation and reveals to the reader Zayd's haughtiness. In addition, it is a criticism of those who view descent from the Prophet (including even the Imams themselves) as establishing a special status within the community of faithful believers. Finally, the report contains a warning that Prophetic descent comes with a responsibility of obedience, and failure to live up to that will result in more serious punishment. These themes, which do not always sit neatly with each other, are developed in other reports in the chapter of al-Ṣadūq's *Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*.

The fourth report¹⁹ is a lax variant of the first, but with a few significant differences. First, here (unlike in Report 1), the meeting is explicitly located after (rather than before) the revolt. A short description of Zayd's activities is presented, though his "burning and killing" are located in Medina rather than Basra (a mix-up which is repeated in other accounts of Zayd's activities). Second, whilst it was Zayd's bragging in Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā's court (or gathering – *majlis*) which prompt the rebuke in the first report, here it is his rebellious and violent actions which cause the Imam's public criticism.

Whilst the Imam's words in Report 4 repeat (in broad terms) those in the first report (at least in the initial section), there are a few interesting asides. The potential scope of guaranteed salvation through Fatima's chastity is, for example, yet further restricted. In Report 1, Imam al-Riḍā explains the term "offspring" (*dhariya*) refers to "al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and any other of her children" (literally "those born from her womb" – *wuld batnihā*). In Report 4, Imam al-Riḍā explains it refers to "al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn exclusively"; Fatima's

19 al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn* ii, 259–10.

other offspring (namely her daughters, and any subsequent descendants) do not benefit from this guarantee of salvation from Hellfire. The “storytellers of Kufa” (*nāqilī al-Kūfa*) who announced the guarantee in the first report are here referred to in derogatory fashion as the “riff-raff of Kufa” (*silfa ahl al-Kūfa*). The implication here is that even this guarantee (to al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn exclusively) is a popular notion and theologically suspect. The eternal fate of the Imams is secured, it would seem, through their own personal piety; their sinlessness is earned and located internally rather than brought about by some external factor (such as their mother’s chastity).

Generally speaking, Report 4 is more wordy, giving more expansive explanations. So, whilst the comparison of Zayd with Mūsā al-Kāẓim occupies a line or two in Report 1, in Report 4, we have a highly critical, extended outburst from Imam al-Riḍā:

[Report 4]: “If you think that you can disobey God and enter heaven, and Mūsā b. Ja’far, who obeyed God will also enter heaven, then you would therefore be more blessed by God than Mūsā b. Ja’far. By God, no one gets to be with God except by obedience, and you claim you can get there by disobeying him! What you say is evil.”

Zayd then said to him, “I am your brother, and son of the same father.”

Zayd, by thinking he will enter heaven despite his disobedience, is arrogating himself above his father Mūsā. Mūsā’s heavenly lot was the result of his obedience; Zayd obviously thinks himself greater than Mūsā since he believes his disobedient will be forgiven. In his response, Zayd appears as a pathetic figure, hurt by his brother’s criticism and appealing to their shared heritage.

The reference to Noah’s son is also amplified by an additional Quranic verse (Noah’s plea that his son is, in truth to one of his family even though he has been disobedient – Q 11:45). Although the reference to the dispute over the recitation of Q 11:49 is not mentioned, the meaning is given a good clear conclusion. The Imam summarises saying, “God excluded him from being one of [Noah’s] family because of his disobedience”.

Report 6²⁰ consists of a short lecture, delivered to Zayd, explaining how the Ahl al-Bayt have gained their rank through piety, not lineage, and admonishing him to fear God and not to treat the Shi’a with disrespect and cruelty. They are suffering enough because of the oppression from the enemies of the Shi’a. The Imam then turns to the report’s narrator (al-Ḥasan b. al-Jahm), in a style similar to that found in the Report 1, advising him to disassociate (*bara*) from

20 al-Ṣadūq, *‘Uyūn* ii, 260.

anyone who opposes God's religion, from whatever tribe they may come. The implication is that even the descendants of the Prophet, when they do wrong, are subject to the same practice of disassociation by the true believers.

By including these reports, al-Ṣadūq, apparently unconcerned that there are inconsistencies and lacunae in terms of timing and geographical location, has eschewed accurate historical narrative in favour of moral truth. The message is, generally, consistent between the three reports (Reports 1, 4 and 6). First, apart perhaps from Imams al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, lineage did not secure any special heavenly advantage for the subsequent Imams. They gain their position on the basis of piety and obedience, like other "ordinary" individuals. Similarly, being descended from the Prophet through 'Alī (i.e. being a member of the Āl al-Bayt) secures no special privilege; that is also based on obedience to God; Zayd is mistaken if he thinks his actions will be ignored in the final judgement purely because he is descended through Imam Mūsā. The theological aim appears to be to demythologise the Imams, subjecting them to universal rules of obedience and divine judgement. It was to be associated with the rationalising tendency in Imami theology, the so-called *muqaṣṣir* position associated with, amongst others, Ibn Qiba in the early Imami community.²¹

As often is the case with reports in the *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, many of the reports combine moral instruction with entertainment. In Report 2,²² when Zayd is brought before al-Ma'mūn following the result, the caliph criticizes him, saying:

"O Zayd! You revolted in Basra. You ignored the houses of our enemies from the Umayya, the Thaḳīf, the 'Adī, the Bāhila and the Āl Ziyād, and you turned your attention to the houses of the tribe of your uncle."

[Zayd] said, jokingly, "From every perspective, I made a mistake, o Prince of Believers. When I go back, I will turn my attention to [the houses of] our enemies."

Al-Ma'mūn laughed and sent him to his brother al-Riḍā, saying to him, "I leave his fate to you [lit. I give you his body]". When they brought him, [al-Riḍā] scolded him and then released him, but took a vow that he would never speak to him again as long as he lived.

21 On whom see generally, Modarressi, *Crisis and consolidation*.

22 al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 258.

Zayd's insolence in front of the caliph makes for fun reading, but the real moral message is revealed in the actions of the Imam, freeing Zayd but having no further contact with him.

Report 3²³ also has much entertainment value, with little in the way of moral instruction. It also has little to do with the subject of al-Ṣadūq's book (namely Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā); it seems to have been included purely for completeness and enjoyment, and to move the narrative along (though the reports are not ordered precisely in chronological order).²⁴ The story recounts how Zayd was saved at the last minute from execution by al-Ma'mūn's governor of Iraq, al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl. The executioner had unsheathed his sword and is about to strike, when al-Ḥajjāj b. Khaythama intervenes:

"Are you sure that if anything were to happen between you and the Prince of Believers, and you have killed this man, then he wouldn't take against you in the same way that he did against Ja'far b. Yaḥyā?"

Al-Ḥasan said to al-Ḥajjāj, "May God reward you!" and he ordered Zayd to be lifted up and returned [to prison]. He stayed in prison until Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī²⁵ came to power, and the people of Baghdad became emboldened against al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl and threw him out of the city. He stayed in prison until he was taken to al-Ma'mūn. He sent him to his brother al-Riḍā, and he released him.²⁶

The remaining reports (numbers 5²⁷ and 7–11²⁸) all drill home the same message concerning the level playing field between the Imams (or more broadly the descendants of the Prophet) and the rest of the believers, and references to Zayd al-Nār have disappeared:

[Report 5]: Imam al-Riḍā recounts a story of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. When asked about the status of the sinner "from amongst you [the imams] or from us [the rest of the Shī'a], al-Ṣādiq cites the Quranic verse Q 4:123 "whoever [*i.e.* including the descendants of the Prophet] does evil works will get what he deserves."

23 al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 258–9.

24 The order would appear to be: reports 1, 3, 2, 4, 6.

25 The printed text reads "Ibrāhīm ibn al-Muhtadī".

26 The report can also be found in al-Tanūkhī's *al-Faraj* iv, 113.

27 al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 260.

28 al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn* ii, 260–272.

[Report 7]: Imam al-Riḍā is reported as saying “He who loves a disobedient person is himself disobedient” and “There are no special relationships between a man and God, and no one gains the proximity to God except through obedience” (*laysa bayna allāh wa-bayn aḥad qarāba; wa-lā yanālu aḥad walayat allāh illā bil-ṭā’a*), ending with the Quranic quote Q 23:103: “When the trumpet is blown [for the last judgement], there will be no bonds of lineage (*ansāb*) between them on that day ...”

[Report 8]: Imam ‘Alī al-Riḍā explains how sinful actions done under *taqīyya* (dissimulation before an invalid government – *dawlat al-bāṭil*) do not have consequences in the next life as they were performed under compulsion, and do not count as transgressions of the law. The suffering of people having to act under *taqīyya* is greater than that of the Imams themselves. The pain they may feel at knowingly committing a transgression under *taqīyya* will actually purify them from guilt.

[Report 9]: Imam ‘Alī al-Riḍā warns the descendants of the Prophet concerning their rights (or just rewards) above the rest of the people: “Whoever gains a just reward through the Prophet, but does not himself give to the people their just rewards, will have no rewards himself.”

[Report 10]: Various statements are attributed to the Imam in which he explains that his position is not one of elevated status through mere lineage, but rather through obedience and piety. He cites, as evidence for this, the Quranic phrase (from Q 49:13): “Truly, the most blessed amongst you (*akramakum*) in the eyes of God are the most pious amongst you.”

[Report 11]: Imam ‘Alī al-Riḍā states that he has freed all his slaves through vows so as to make it clear he is not superior to anyone, even slaves, on account of his descent from the Prophet. “Only by doing good deeds can I be superior to another.”

The reports, then, establish the authority of the Imam on the basis not of descent, or charismatic status, or special miraculous powers. The Imams have earned their rightful position as leaders through their good acts, their submission to God’s will and their piety. It is a demystified Imamate which emerges from the selection, ordering and presentation of these reports. In fact, descent from the Prophet creates a greater level of personal and community responsibility for the individual. The story of Zayd al-Nār has served as a useful, illustrative tale of how one of the Ahl al-Bayt can err egregiously, and, like Noah’s son, lose his status as a member of the Prophet’s house.

A Confusion of Names: Zayd al-Nār and Zayd b. ‘Alī

That Zayd b. Mūsā was the second Shi‘i rebel named Zayd created occasional confusion. The potential was identified at an early stage with another story of al-Ṣadūq’s *‘Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*:

When Zayd b. Mūsā was brought to al-Ma’mūn, having already rebelled in Basra and burned the houses of the descendants of al-‘Abbās, al-Ma’mūn presented his crimes to his brother ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, saying, “Oh Abū al-Ḥasan, as your brother has rebelled, and done what he has done, so Zayd b. ‘Alī rebelled before him, and he was killed. If it was not for your position in relation to me, then I would kill him also. What he has done is not insignificant.”

Al-Riḍā said, “O Prince of Believers, do not compare my brother Zayd to Zayd b. ‘Alī. [Zayd b. ‘Alī] was one of the scholars of the Āl Muḥammad, who was angry for the sake of God – fighting His enemies until he was killed in His path. It has been reported to me by my father Mūsā b. Ja‘far that he heard his father, Ja‘far b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī say, ‘God have mercy on my uncle Zayd; he called to the Acceptable One from the Family of Muḥammad. If he had been successful, he would have carried out what he had promised. He consulted me about his uprising, and I said to him, ‘O Uncle, if you want to be killed and your body hung out in Kunāsa, then that is your business.’ When he had gone, Ja‘far b. Muḥammad said, ‘Woe to whoever hears his call but does not help him.’”

Al-Ma’mūn said, “O Abū al-Ḥāsan, has something been transmitted [or brought: to us] about one who claims the leadership (*imāma*) without justification?”

Al-Riḍā said, “Zayd b. ‘Alī didn’t claim something to which he had no right. He was more dedicated to God than that. He used to call people to the Acceptable One from the family of Muḥammad. What has been transmitted [to us] only refers to one who claims that he has been designated by God, and then calls people to something other than the religion of God, ignorantly leading them away from His path. Zayd, by God, was someone to whom the following verse was addressed: (Q 22:78): “Strive for God, with the due *jihād* – he has chosen you.”²⁹

29 Al-Ṣadūq, *‘Uyūn* i, 226.

The report actually appears not in the section on Zayd al-Nār, but in the reports concerning Zayd b. 'Alī. The ambivalent attitude of the Twelver Shi'i tradition to Zayd b. 'Alī and his rebellion is, perhaps, the subject of a separate study. Suffice it to say here that this report is the first in a section of seven in the *Uyūn* in which Zayd b. 'Alī is attributed noble qualities, and is recognised as a loyal member of the House of the Prophet. Zayd b. 'Alī is, then, rescued from the political activism of Zaydism and re-employed in the generally more cautious and quietist tradition of Imāmī Twelver Shi'ism. Al-Shaykh Mufīd (d.413/1022) records that al-Riḍā forbade Zayd al-Nār from rising up against the Sulṭān (*ankara 'alā akhihi Zayd bin Mūsā al-khurūj 'alā al-sulṭān*).³⁰

A few commentators clearly confuse Zayd al-Nār with Zayd b. 'Alī. Amongst them is Ibn 'Asākir (d.571/1176):

In the year 121 in the month of Ṣafar, Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn was killed in Kufa, and his body hung on display in Kunāsa. It was Yūsuf b. 'Umar who conquered him, and then [his body] was burned; that is why he was called Zayd al-Nār.³¹

Linking the famous immolation of Zayd b. 'Alī with the name Zayd al-Nār is perhaps understandable given the collocation of terms and ideas (rebellion, the name Zayd, Ḥusaynid descent, burning etc.). The passage is repeated (almost verbatim) by Ibn al-'Adīm (d. 660/1262)³² and the linkage is asserted once more by al-al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363).³³ The identification of Zayd b. 'Alī as Zayd al-Nār, rather than Zayd b. Mūsā, was possibly first put forward by the 'Abbasid historian Muḥammad b. Yahyā al-Ṣūlī (d. 335/947) in work apparently lost, but seen and cited by Ibn 'Asākir (d. 573/1175).

Conclusion: Problematic Position of Zayd

The ambivalence displayed to Zayd al-Nār reflects some of the fundamental tensions within Shi'ism during the 'Abbasid period. First, there is the fact that he rebelled, continuing a tradition of Alid rebellions of the period before Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. circa 114/732); but this rebellion was not one in which he proclaimed himself as Imam, or (it seems) was thought as such by

30 al-Shaykh al-Mufīd, *al-Masā'il al-jarūdiyya* 39.

31 Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh*, xix, 477.

32 Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughyat*, ix, 4047.

33 al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi*, xv, 22.

his followers. Instead his rebellion began as part of a larger anti-ʿAbbasid resistance movement, led by Abū Sarāya. The banner was raised in the name of the house of ʿAlī, but it does not appear to have been focused around an individual contender who should replace the ʿAbbasid Caliph as the rightful leader of the Muslims. Rather, a number of rebellions in different locations took place; these were led by different individuals, either inspired by or allied with Abū Sarāya's movement.

Second, the Imāmī rejection of Zayd al-Nār's rebellion is used to boost the quietist position promoted first by Muḥammad al-Bāqir and then by Jaʿfar al-Šādiq, and still an element in the discourse attributed to ʿAlī al-Riḍā. As a Shiʿi rebel, whose rebellion represented a direct threat to ʿAlī al-Riḍā's political plan, he must be seen as a renegade who has challenged the authority of the designated Imam.

Third, as a *muḥaddith*, he needs to be viewed as at least an acceptable transmitter of the Imam's words, so that the *ḥadīth* he recounts can be used in theological and legal argumentation.³⁴ But as a wayward individual, his trustworthiness must be brought into question.

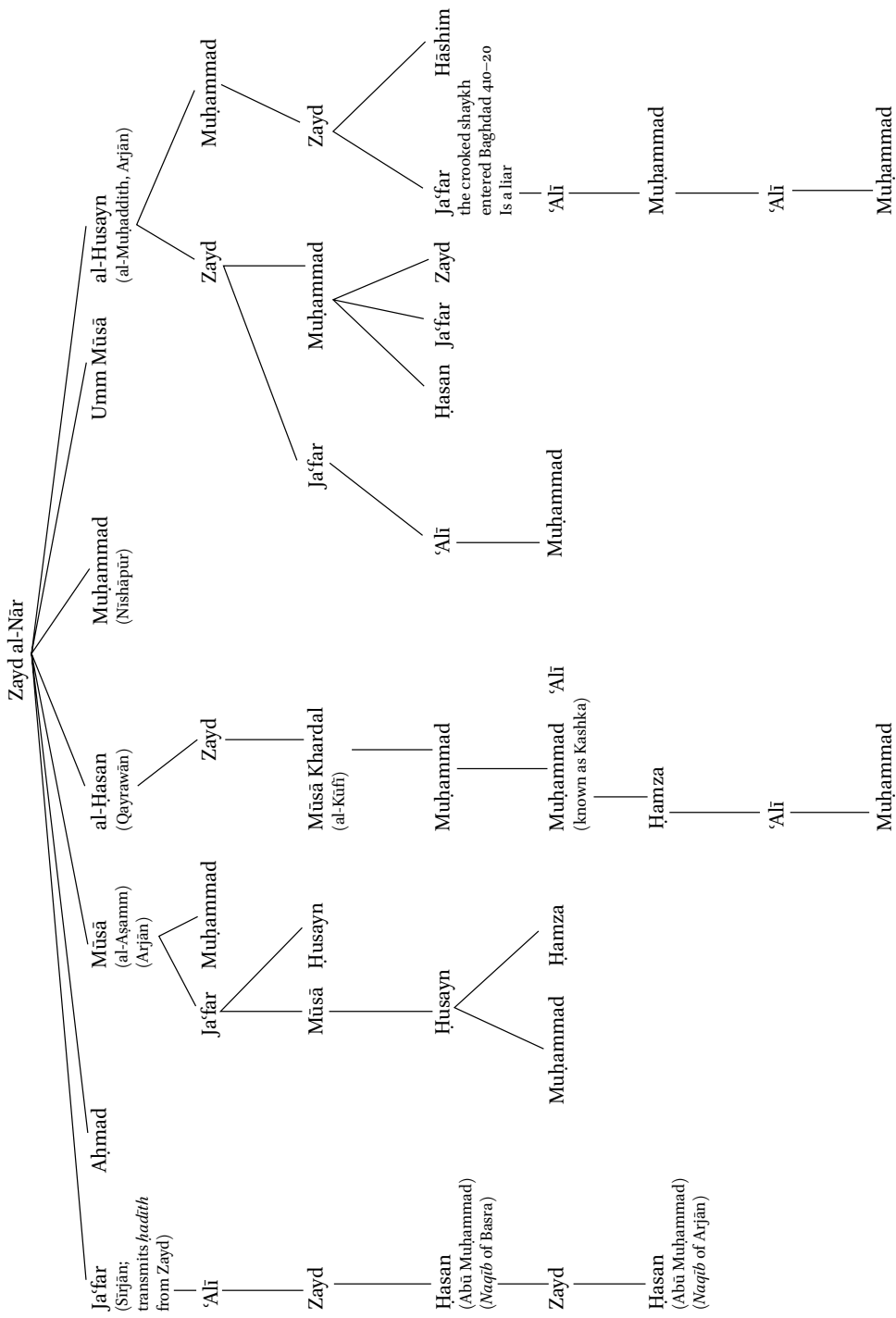
Finally, as a member of the People of the House, and a brother of the Imam, his charismatic power is strong, but his behaviour jeopardizes this privileged status, to the point where the possibility of ejection from the House of the Prophet is entertained in some of the reports attributed to Imam ʿAlī al-Riḍā.

These contradictions and tensions are exemplified in subsequent Shiʿi tradition and the later assessment of Zayd al-Nār. One telling example of that is the assessment by Grand Ayatallah Abū al-Qāsim al-Khūʾī (d.1992) of Zayd's merits as a transmitter of *ḥadīth*.³⁵ As a transmitter his reliability is guaranteed by the statement of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd that all the sons of Mūsā are "honourable and well-respected", and therefore worthy transmitters of their father's *ḥadīth*. However, the negative reports from ʿAlī al-Riḍā remain and cast doubt over his reliability. The compromise suggested by al-Khūʾī is that the praise establishes him as a reliable transmitter, but the negative reports mean that, in terms of *dīn* (here viewed generally as religious observance, religious commitment) there remain questions. The ambiguous messages emerging from any Shiʿi analysis of the episode of Zayd al-Nār inevitably lead to precarious compromises.

34 Zayd's son Jaʿfar transmits a *ḥadīth* from Zayd "from his ancestors, upon them be peace" (see al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi* i, 355); Zayd b. Mūsā transmits reports from Mūsā. See al-Šādūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, 430; al-Ṭabarī, *Dalāʾil*, 146; al-Ṭabarsī, *al-Iḥtijāj*, ii, 27.

35 See appendix 2.

Appendix 1: The Descendants of Zayd



Appendix 2: Abū al-Qāsim al-Kū'ī on Zayd al-Nār³⁶

Zayd b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim:

We have already cited in the entry of Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā the words of al-Mufīd in his *Kitāb al-Irshād* that, “Everyone of the offspring of Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā was honourable and was well-respected.”

He relates from his forefathers, and his son Ja‘far relates from him, in reference to [al-Kulaynī’s] *al-Kaḥf*, volume 1: *Kitāb al-Ḥujja* ḥadīth 4 – Chapter on distinguishing between the call of the righteous and that of those considered invalid [claimants] concerning the Imamate.³⁷

Al-Ṣadūq [Ibn Bābawayh] related from Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Majaylūhah and Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. al-Mutawakkil and Aḥmad b. Ziyād b. Ja‘far al-Hamadānī, who all say:

‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim reports to us that Yāsir reported to him that Zayd b. Mūsā, the brother of Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Riḍā] rebelled in Medina. He burned and killed, and hence he was called Zayd al-Nār. Al-Ma‘mūn sent out a troop against him, imprisoned him and he was brought to al-Ma‘mūn. Al-Ma‘mūn said, “Send him to Abū al-Ḥasan.” Yāsir says that when he was brought to him, Abū al-Ḥasan said to him, “Has what the storytellers of Kufa (*nāqilī al-Kūfa*) said made you so proud? [They say,] “Fatima remained chaste so that God might preserve her offspring from the fire”, but this referred to none, other than al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn alone. If you think that you can disobey God and enter heaven, and Mūsā b. Ja‘far, who obeyed God will also enter heaven, then you would therefore be more blessed by God than Mūsā b. Ja‘far. By God, no one gets to be with God except by obedience, and you claim you can get there by disobeying him! What you say is evil.”

Zayd then said to him, “I am you brother, and son of the same father.”

Abū al-Ḥasan said, “You are my brother as long as you obey God. Noah said, (Q 11:45) “Lord, my son was from my family; and indeed, Your promise is true; and You are the most just of judges!” and God said, (Q 11:46) “O Noah, he is not one of your family – it is an unrighteous deed.” On account of his disobedience, God expelled him from [Noah’s] family.³⁸

It is related also from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad al-Nassāba [the one who is expert in genealogies], from his teachers that Zayd b. Mūsā was a companion of [Caliph] al-Muntaṣir, and was, according to him, honourable. He was

36 al-Khū‘ī, *Mu‘jam* viii, 372.

37 al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi* i, 355.

38 al-Ṣadūq, *‘Uyūn* ii, 257–8.

a Zaydī. [End of] the report. This is also reported in ‘*Uyūn [akhbār al-Riḍā]*, chapter 58, ḥadīth no. 34.³⁹

In that book, things that indicate that Zayd was to be condemned are also mentioned. But all of these reports are weak, and not to be relied upon.

What it is simplest to say is that there is no rejection of Zayd here regarding his trustworthiness or praising him [with respect to transmitting reports]. Al-Mufid’s statement concerning praising [Zayd] does not [though] indicate that this was in relation to his religious devotion, as is obvious.

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Final Summation



Comparing Carolingians and ‘Abbasids

Michael Cook

The contributors to this volume – as to the conference that gave rise to it – fall into two groups: specialists on the Carolingians, or more broadly Western Europe in the Middle Ages; and specialists on the ‘Abbasids, or more broadly the medieval Islamic world. There is no overlap, in other words no one equally at home in both domains. The task of composing these final remarks thus necessarily falls to a member of one group or the other – in the event, to a specialist on the medieval Islamic world. My view of the two domains is accordingly a very asymmetric one, and not just in terms of the limits of my knowledge.¹ After being immersed in it for several decades, the medieval Islamic world is to me the incarnation of normality; the Carolingian empire, by contrast, inevitably strikes me as outlandish, or more politely, exotic – as it must have done the envoys sent there by the ‘Abbasid Caliphs, not to mention the unfortunate elephant they brought with them on one of their missions. In presenting my comparative commentary on the individual papers I will nevertheless make every effort to be even-handed. But once I have finished discussing the papers I will offer some comparisons on three themes of my own choosing,² and at that point I will no longer attempt such self-discipline. The first of the three themes I will take up there is identity – a buzz-word, but I do, I think, have something to say about the subject. The second is the implications of the collapse of urban civilization in Western Europe, or at least of its absence in the period that concerns us. The third is a pair of factors affecting royal succession that in the Carolingian context must have helped to tip the balance against kings and in favor of aristocrats.

Comparisons Arising from the Papers

Jennifer Davis on Charlemagne’s Missi

In her paper “Inventing the *missi*” Jennifer Davis analyses Charlemagne’s practice of sending out emissaries – *missi* – as part of his way of governing

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- 1 I am greatly indebted to Jennifer Davis for reading an incomplete draft of these comments, saving me from errors, pointing me in new directions, and directing me to much literature I would otherwise have missed.
 - 2 This section is based on the closing remarks it was my privilege to deliver at the conference.

the Carolingian empire. Their task was to look into matters of concern, fix problems, and report back to the king. Three basic features characterized this practice. First, though it had antecedents, its centrality to governance under Charlemagne was new. Second, though to be a *missus* was to hold an office, it was a very open-ended one; *missi* did a great variety of things in a great variety of ways, and a move towards systematization came only under Charlemagne's successor Louis the Pious. Third, the system was not comprehensive. That is to say, we are not to imagine that *missi* were active everywhere, all the time, and on all matters that came within the purview of government; their deployment was *ad hoc*.

What is striking from a comparative point of view is that there was no such system at the core of Caliphal government. Caliphs did, of course, send out emissaries from time to time and for various reasons; as early as the reign of 'Uthmān (ruled 644–56) we find a Caliph dispatching agents to the provinces to check things out.³ But this was marginal. The basic way in which Caliphs got things done in the provinces was by appointing provincial governors they could rely on and giving them their orders. If they did not like the results they could fire the governor and put in someone else; typically they allowed governors no more than a few years in a posting. Thus Hārūn al-Rashīd, in the course of a reign of twenty-two-and-a-half years (786–809), went through ten governors of Medina, sixteen of Mecca, nine of Kūfa, fifteen of Baṣra, and ten of Khurāsān.⁴ This was no doubt for fear that an over-ambitious governor might entrench himself in his province and acquire the wherewithal to resist the central government. This was, of course, precisely what happened – or one of the things that happened – from the mid-ninth century onwards, as the central government weakened and the provinces went their separate ways (the other things that happened were that provinces were taken over by upstarts or invaders). The sense one has is that as long as the Caliphs retained their ability to hire and fire governors at will, a system of government through *missi* would have been largely otiose; once they lost that power, it would no longer have been possible for them to implement and maintain it. In other words, there does not seem to be anything puzzling about the absence of the institution from the lands of the Caliphate.

Should we then be puzzled by the prominence of the institution in the Carolingian lands? That probably depends on who “we” are and what we take for granted. What seems clear is that the contrast between the two empires

3 Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh* series i, 2943; trans. Rosenthal et al., xv, 147; see also Madelung, *Succession to Muḥammad* 112 n. 163.

4 So Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh* series iii, 739–40; trans. Rosenthal et al., xxx, 304–5.

must point to a fundamental difference between the two polities, and it is not hard to suggest what this might be: the Carolingian empire was marked by a much more balanced and symbiotic relationship between ruler and aristocracy than the 'Abbasid empire. On the one hand the ruler, as Chris Wickham remarks, disposed of "immense patronage powers," he could make members of aristocratic families "rich and powerful beyond any previous imagining," he could grant any of some six hundred counties and one hundred and eighty bishoprics to his supporters, and in due course he could revoke his grants.⁵ But on the other hand he confronted "the rooted local power of aristocracies both large and small," with the result that counts and bishops tended to stem from "long-standing local élites," and few if any of the aristocratic families whose power was boosted by the ruler were newly created.⁶ Thus already in the reign of Charlemagne "a loyal aristocrat could assume that his son might well inherit his county."⁷ The result was to make the empire "an immense oligarchy"; as Wickham puts it with regard to the poor prospects of peasants in litigation, they were competing in a political system "obviously run by the aristocracy."⁸ A very practical manifestation of this symbiotic relationship between ruler and aristocracy was the Carolingian practice, continued from their predecessors, of convening public assemblies at least once a year; these were regularly attended by major lay and ecclesiastical figures, and were occasions for serious deliberations about policy.⁹ To any student of 'Abbasid history this practice looks more than a little exotic.

So it should not surprise us that, as Davis reminds us, the *missi* themselves were often aristocrats, sometimes leading ones, and might have close ties to the aristocracies they engaged with in the course of their duties – as in the case of Arn of Salzburg. As she suggests elsewhere, Charlemagne's reliance on *missi* could be seen as one way to avoid having to fire counts.¹⁰ However politic

5 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 392, 388, 381 respectively; the figures are estimates. Wickham stresses that a ruler as late as Charles the Bald (ruled 840–77) remained "hegemonic over his aristocracy" (400, with examples).

6 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 389, 388 respectively.

7 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 403–4, with the example of the county of Paris from the 750s to the 850s. He goes on to remark that "all the Carolingians recognized that the sons of counts should normally get a county *somewhere*." For the tendency for the office of count to remain within a family, see also McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 88; for the tendency to appoint the local magnate in a district as its count, see 87.

8 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 389, 392. He contrasts the situation in the Caliphate (334, and see 335).

9 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 386.

10 Davis, *Charlemagne's practice of empire* 116–18.

this might be in the Carolingian context, it would not have made much sense to Hārūn al-Rashīd.

Jürgen Paul on Ḥasanawayh the Kurd

Jürgen Paul's analysis of the career of Ḥasanawayh the Kurd (d. 980) and his successors is a variation on a familiar theme: states, especially pre-modern states, have a hard time getting a grip on mountainous territory, while local non-state actors have a much easier time of it there than they do in the plains. What is interesting here is where the case of Ḥasanawayh falls in terms of the variation that goes with this theme.

At one extreme of this variation there are cases in which the power of the state stops where the mountains begin. Consider the case of the Carduchians, who lived some fourteen hundred years before Ḥasanawayh but not so far away. When ten thousand desperate Greek mercenaries found themselves stranded on the plains of Mesopotamia in 401 BC as a result of their role in a failed rebellion against a Persian king, they marched up into Carduchia – the mountainous territory between the plains and Lake Van – in a bid to escape. Before doing so they had made inquiries about the inhabitants of the mountains, and their informants told them “that these Carduchians dwelt throughout the mountains, that they were warlike, that they did not obey the King, that, to the contrary, once a royal army of one hundred twenty thousand invaded them but that because of the roughness of the country, not one of them returned home.”¹¹ In the event it took the Greeks seven days to traverse the mountains, attacked by the Carduchians every inch of the way. When they finally emerged from the mountains into Armenia, the first thing they saw in the light of dawn was a Persian army sitting on the plain in front of them.¹² But Carduchia itself was a black hole in the middle of one of the most powerful states of the day. Some twelve hundred years later and over two thousand miles to the west, the relations of Charlemagne (ruled 768–814) with the Basques do not seem to have been very different. Famously, they destroyed the rearguard of his army at Roncesvalles in 778, as it retreated through the western Pyrenees.¹³

At the other extreme, states that are really determined can contrive to project power into the mountains, even under pre-modern conditions. The English eventually conquered Wales, though despite their military strength following the Norman conquest it took them over two centuries to complete the process. When the Spanish suppressed the Morisco rebellion that broke

11 Xenophon, *Anabasis* 120 (3.5.16); and see Cook, *Persian empire* 212–13.

12 Xenophon, *Anabasis* 128 (4.3. 2–4).

13 I shall return to the Basques below.

out in the Alpujarras in 1568, they mustered enough military power to carry out a mass deportation of the mountaineers and replace them with newcomers.¹⁴ But in contrast to the case of Wales this was not just a matter of the domestic desirability of controlling one's mountains; the unusually drastic assertion of power over the Morisco mountaineers reflected the threat they posed as a potential fifth column in alliance with the Ottomans. Gradually, modern conditions made things easier for states. When Edmond About poked fun at the mid-nineteenth-century Greeks by spinning a yarn about the *de facto* sovereignty of a bandit chief in the mountains some twelve miles from the city of Athens – the “Roi des montagnes” – he was trading on the fact that such a situation was by now unthinkable for his readers in Western Europe.¹⁵

Paul's account of Ḥasanawayh and his successors shows us a situation somewhere between the black hole of Carduchia in Achaemenid times and the eventual English conquest of Wales. This is not in itself surprising; historically such intermediate cases are very common, perhaps typical. What is particularly interesting about the case of Ḥasanawayh is that Paul does not give us just a single snapshot of the balance of power between states and non-state actors in the mountains of later-tenth-century Kurdistan, valuable though that is. He also shows us how that balance changed over time. Ḥasanawayh himself was clearly an autonomous actor, a man with a castle of his own and a tribal following of Barzikānī Kurds; in this sense he was a product of a local upwelling. But he was prepared to do business with the rulers of the plains, even to the extent of handing over a significant tribute to one of them, especially when pressed by a military expedition he failed to defeat. In that sense he was not just a local figure, but also something like a vassal of the ruler – and eventually of two rulers. Yet he was not a provincial governor whom they could hire and fire at will. His death, however, put the boot on the other foot: the most powerful neighboring ruler seized his castles. But this ruler did not appoint in his place a provincial governor from outside. Though he imprisoned most of Ḥasanawayh's sons, it was to one of them, Badr, that he graciously handed over the leadership of the Barzikānī Kurds. Thus while the father was still his own man, the son, as Paul puts it, was a dependent of the ruler, albeit a fairly successful one.

14 Wiegiers, *Moriscos* 242b; McNeill, *Mountains of the Mediterranean world* 97, 190–1. Two families per village were permitted to stay so that they could pass on their local knowledge.

15 About, *Roi des montagnes*. As a naïve English girl held for ransom puts it: “Comment supposer qu’Hadgi-Stavros nous retiendrait impunément, à cinq lieues de la capitale, de la cour, de l’armée grecque, d’un bataillon de Sa Majesté Britannique et d’un stationnaire anglais?” (50; Hadgi-Stavros is the “King of the mountains”).

What can we find to match this on the Carolingian side, in the Alps or the Pyrenees? We think immediately of the legendary conflict between William Tell and the Austrian bailiff as recounted in the later fifteenth century, but what historical phenomena can we find to compare and contrast with the careers of Ḥasanawayh and his sons?

We have all heard of Canossa as the castle outside which the emperor Henry IV stood barefoot in the snow in January 1077 while awaiting absolution from Pope Gregory VII.¹⁶ A dozen miles southwest of Reggio in the northern Apennines, it belonged to the Pope's leading Italian supporter, Matilda of Tuscany (d. 1115).¹⁷ But in the present context it has a very different significance, one that goes back to her great-grandfather Adalbert-Atto (d. 989).¹⁸ He and his contemporary Ḥasanawayh lived in the days when there were still Carolingians and 'Abbasids, but by this time they no longer mattered much. Like Ḥasanawayh, Adalbert-Atto was a man with a castle in the mountains who helped a ruler in the plains against an enemy, was rewarded for it, and established a kind of dynasty which in his case lasted till the death of Matilda. But the trajectories of the two families differed in two obvious respects. First, the main theme in the rise of Adalbert-Atto and his descendants was the acquisition of land in the plains, whereas Ḥasanawayh and his sons remained in the mountains. Secondly, over time the Canossans became less rather than more dependent on the rulers of the day. Neither difference is of great comparative interest, though the first may have something to do with the fact that the mountains of the northern Apennines cannot compete in scale with those of Kurdistan.

There is nevertheless one contrast that is of far wider significance. Ḥasanawayh's bid for power was based not just on his castle but also on his fellow-tribesmen, the Barzikānī Kurds; they were his people, and they were bonded to him by ties of blood. Adalbert-Atto had no comparable resource at his disposal; instead his people were his vassals.¹⁹ Back in ancient times there is little doubt that tribes were still widespread in Western Europe, but by the tenth century they were no longer in evidence. This applies not just to the

16 Freed, Canossa.

17 Osheim, Matilda of Tuscany.

18 For this story see Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 513.

19 For an occasion in 962 when Adalbert-Atto made an appearance flanked by nineteen vassals (*vasalli*) of his, see Fumagalli, *Origini di una grande dinastia feudale* 52–6; of the twelve whose provenance is known, four were from the Apennines and eight from the plains (92 Map IV). My point here is not that the 'Abbasid world lacked vassals – Ḥasanawayh himself was one – but that Western Europe lacked tribesmen.

northern Apennines, but also to altogether more formidable mountain zones such as the Alps and the Pyrenees. Our sources give us occasional glimpses of society in these mountainous regions in the ninth and early tenth centuries; what they reveal is the strength of free peasantries and the weakness of aristocracies in such regions²⁰ – not the presence of the tribes that we would expect to see in comparable environments in the Middle East and North Africa. In comparative terms the Middle East and North Africa are perhaps somewhat unusual in the extent of the persistence of tribal societies alongside regions of peasant agriculture and urban civilization into modern times, but in this respect they are not grossly out of line with the historical experience of Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, or East Asia. Western Europe, by contrast, is highly unusual in the disappearance of all tribal societies by or in medieval times.²¹ Because it is a case of a dog that doesn't bark, this major feature of Western European history tends not to receive attention from medievalists, but it amply deserves it.

Eric Goldberg on Hunting the Onager

Perhaps wisely, most of the contributors to this volume are content to speak only within the domain of their expertise, be it Carolingian or 'Abbasid. We come now to two bold exceptions, Eric Goldberg on the hunting of the onager and Walter Pohl on ethnicity. As we will see below, Pohl in one part of his paper provides us with a comparison of the two domains. Goldberg, by contrast, devotes the whole of his paper to connections between them.

Underlying his exploration of these connections is a larger historical perspective. Both Carolingian and 'Abbasid society exemplify a widespread Eurasian pattern in which royal and aristocratic hunting was one of the most salient features of elite life.²² Like astrology, hunting was almost a pan-Eurasian obsession, and it was a lot more fun than the anxious business of discerning the future. This gave it a singular utility in facilitating diplomatic relations between the various polities of Eurasia: representatives of very different cultures, whose interactions must often have been awkward and stilted, could bond in friendly rivalry in the context of the chase.²³ It was, in a way, the medieval

20 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 211, 216, 534.

21 For this disappearance see Crone, *Pre-industrial societies* 151–3.

22 For this larger pattern see Allsen, *Royal hunt*.

23 "Hunting served as a cross-cultural bridge; any foreign notable arriving at court was automatically assumed to be an avid huntsman interested in the topic" (Allsen, *Royal hunt* 270).

equivalent of golf – just as hunting accidents were the medieval equivalent of helicopter accidents.²⁴

Onagers were native to the Near East and some other parts of Asia, and the ‘Abbasids were heirs to an ancient tradition of onager hunting. But the animal was not to be found further west. Goldberg nevertheless reconstructs two transient attempts to establish onagers in game-parks set in regions to which they were not native. These attempts that suggest that ‘Abbasid onager hunting could strike external observers as exhilarating and prestigious, even if an onager could look to them a bit too much like a donkey.

The later of these attempts was made by the Byzantines in the tenth century, very likely in association with their territorial expansion into northern Syria. Thanks to the sour testimony of Liutprand of Cremona in 968, the evidence in this case is direct. The earlier attempt, and the one at the center of the paper, would seem to have been made by the Carolingians in the later eighth or early ninth centuries. Here we lack direct evidence, but there are indications which, taken together, add up to a rather persuasive case: the undoubted existence of Carolingian-‘Abbasid diplomatic relations, with some attestation of the joint hunting that we can expect to have accompanied them; suggestive Carolingian references to onagers that go beyond the information (or misinformation) available from classical sources and the Bible; the appearance of several game-parks in the Carolingian empire after a long period in which they are absent from the sources; Muslim textiles that found their way to ninth-century Europe bearing images of a famous feat of the Sasanian monarch Bahrām Gūr (ruled 420–38), who is reputed to have taken down a lion and an onager with a single bowshot; the apparent recycling of this feat by Notker the Stammerer as an achievement of the Carolingian Pippin III (ruled 741–68); and finally, Goldberg’s argument for Muslim influence on an anonymous Carolingian text concerned with the admissibility of eating animals killed by a hunter’s dogs or birds in the chase – a text that itself contains one of those suggestive mentions of onagers. Some of this may be questionable, but overall it seems to add up to a good bet.²⁵

Since Goldberg has in effect taken care of the comparison between Carolingians and ‘Abbasids in the course of presenting his argument about the connections between them, my own task here is much reduced. I will accordingly limit myself to a brief comment on the question of Muslim influence

24 See Allsen, *Royal hunt* 208.

25 It fits well with the generalized account of the mechanisms and motives behind the cross-cultural homogenization of Eurasian hunting practices set out by Allsen in his Conclusion (*Royal hunt* 269–70).

on the anonymous text.²⁶ This short but purposive piece was written during a famine that has plausibly been identified with one that broke out along the Rhine in 850 – a context that could well have made the issue more urgent as hunting to impress gave way to hunting to stay alive.²⁷ The central argument is a simple one: an animal killed by a hunter's dog or bird counts as one killed by the hunter himself. Consequently it does not fall into the category of "strangled," and so may be eaten. The case for Muslim influence here rests on two points. One, which I cannot judge, is the absence of earlier articulations of this argument on the Western Christian side.²⁸ The other is the undoubted fact that the key point is well-established on the Muslim side. Here Goldberg aptly quotes Q5:4, which is part of a response to the question what is permitted. It specifies a category of hunting animals: "such hunting creatures as you teach, training them as hounds, and teaching them as God taught you." Having defined this category, the verse goes on to instruct the believers to "eat what they seize for you, and mention God's Name over it."

How good is this as a case for Muslim influence? Let us assume that Goldberg is right about the unprecedented character of the doctrine in the Western Christian context. Let us also take it as given that diplomatic interaction between Carolingians and 'Abbasids over the preceding decades had provided considerable opportunity for the two parties to get to know each other, and that in the course of this they were more than likely to have become familiar with each other's views and practices with regard to hunting. Against that background, there is nothing implausible about the idea that someone on the Carolingian side could have become aware of the Islamic legal doctrine that derives from Q5:4 and been impressed by it.²⁹ But can we clinch the case? The evidential problem is that we are dealing with the transmission – if that is what it was – of a single simple idea conveyed orally, not of a complex structure of ideas conveyed in written form.³⁰ There is any amount of small

26 This text is discussed more extensively in Goldberg, "The hunt belongs to man" 33–41, with a translation at 46–8; in that discussion, however, Goldberg does not argue for Muslim influence.

27 Cf. Allsen, *Royal hunt* 122–3.

28 In addition to Goldberg's general statement of this point in the present volume, see Goldberg, "The hunt belongs to man" 38, on two Latin penitentials that would seem to antedate our text; both regard animals killed by dogs or hawks as "strangled."

29 There would have been no need for the doctrine to reach Carolingian ears in the specific form of a Koranic quotation.

30 A simple idea could, of course, be expressed in some particular way on both sides, giving us reason to believe that it had diffused from one side to the other; but that is not the case here.

print about hunting in legal works on the Muslim side of the fence, but it does not reappear in our Carolingian text. Thus the presumption that this text could not have been written independently of Muslim influence cannot be a strong one. This is a frustration that is bound to arise with considerable frequency in the context of such informal cross-cultural contacts. In general we can be confident that they happened often enough, but this confidence will often be denied us when we turn to particular cases.

Walter Pohl on Ethnicity in the Carolingian Empire

Over the years Walter Pohl has devoted a large part of his research to questions of ethnicity in early medieval Europe. In his contribution to the present volume he gives us a rich survey of ethnicity in the Carolingian empire, at the end of which he devotes a section to comparison with the Islamic world of the time. At the core of this comparison is a disparity in naming practice that, as Pohl observes, calls out for explanation: "Why were polities often named after peoples in the early medieval Latin West, and not in the early Islamic world?" Pohl does not seek to provide a firm answer to the question, but he uses the divergence to argue that "the formation of ethnic kingdoms in early medieval Europe ... was by no means natural, or self-explanatory."

There are perhaps a couple of comments worth making here from the Islamic side. The first is simply to endorse Pohl's contrast as correct, significant, and in need of explanation.

The second is that in this regard, as in many others, the norms that developed in the early Islamic world represented a break with the past. Those norms apart, naming polities after peoples was commonplace in the region. For example, one of our oldest Arabic texts is an inscription marking the grave of a minor Arabian king, a member of the Lakhmid dynasty who died in 328; he describes himself somewhat grandiosely as "king of all the Arabs" (*malik al-'Arab kullihā*).³¹ In the previous century the ruler of the Sasanian empire, Shāhpūr I (ruled 240–70), had identified himself as "king of kings of the Aryans and non-Aryans" – or to modernize the ethnic term, "king of kings of the Iranians and non-Iranians."³² The Byzantine emperors began to use such a title on their coins only under Michael I (ruled 811–13), when he and his co-emperor de-

31 Beeston, Nemara and Faw 3, 6.

32 Maricq, *Res gestae divi Saporis* 305. I here translate the Greek text, but the Persian and Parthian texts carry the same meaning; the Persian *Ērān* and the Parthian *Aryān* name a people, not a place, just as the Persian *Ērānshahr* and its Parthian equivalent mean "the polity of the Aryans/Iranians," not "the land of Iran."

scribed themselves as “emperors of the Romans” (*basilis Romaion*).³³ But the title was in use considerably earlier.³⁴ Likewise the early Islamic sources often speak of non-Muslim rulers in the same manner. They regularly identify the Byzantine emperor as the “king of the Romans” (*malik al-Rūm*),³⁵ and less commonly they speak in the same way of the “king of the Persians” (*malik al-Furs*).³⁶ Naming polities after the peoples who in some sense owned them would thus seem to have come easily to the inhabitants of the region. Nor did the Muslims entirely abandon the practice even when speaking of their own rulers. They referred to the rule of the Būyid dynasty (932–1062) as “the reign of the Daylamites” (*al-dawla al-Daylamiyya*, *dawlat al-Daylam*);³⁷ by contrast the astrologers would speak of the earlier phase of Islamic history as “the reign of the Arabs” (*dawlat al-ʿArab*).³⁸ Nor was such talk confined to the astrologers: a tenth-century Muslim philosopher composing a work on the glories of Islam spoke of the Islamic state as “the kingdom of the Arabs” (*mulk al-ʿArab*).³⁹ One of the Mazyadid rulers of Ḥilla in Iraq, Ṣadaqa ibn Maṣṣūr (ruled 1086–1108), was to bear the title “king of the Arabs” (*malik al-ʿArab*).⁴⁰ In short, the habit of naming polities after peoples antedated Islam in the region and survived it, albeit in a more limited way.

The obvious inferences from these facts are that the future Islamic world, like early medieval Europe, was a region in which polities were readily named after peoples, and that what made it different was the advent of Islam, with its unusual commitment to a religious rather than an ethnic conception of the polity. The Caliph was the Commander of the Faithful (*Amīr al-Muʾminīn*), not the Commander of the Arabs; the treasury was the Treasury of the Muslims (*Bayt Māl al-Muslimīn*), not the Treasury of the Arabs. In other words, the

33 Sommer, *Münzen des byzantinischen Reiches* 261 no. 28.1.

34 See Bréhier, *Institutions de l'empire byzantin* 47, and the references given there. He adds to them two Greek inscriptions in which Justinian is referred to as *basileus Rhōmaion* (*Corpus inscriptionum graecarum*, iv, 297 no. 8634, 300 no. 8642).

35 See for example Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya* i, 37, 62, 224; ii, 607, all glossing Qayṣar as *malik al-Rūm*; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* series I, 840, 871, 946, 952; trans. Rosenthal et al., v, 58, 105, 236, 244. The data-base al-Maktaba al-Shāmīla yields 54 instances of the phrase in this work.

36 See for example Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* series I, 516, 2883; trans. Rosenthal et al., iii, 98, xv, 89. The more common form *malik Fāris* is for our purposes ambiguous, since Fāris can be either the people or the country.

37 Madelung, Assumption of the title Shāhānshāh by the Būyids 89, 93 and nn. 42–3.

38 Madelung, Assumption of the title Shāhānshāh by the Būyids 96.

39 Cook, *Ancient religions* 13.

40 Bosworth, *New Islamic dynasties* 87.

Islamic situation has the look of an outlier. That in turn suggests that while naming polities after peoples may not be exactly natural, we could hardly call it unnatural. In the Carolingian case it was undoubtedly associated with a development of ethnicity that was in at least one way extreme, namely the ethnically based legal pluralism of Carolingian times. But the comparison of the two regions does at least suggest that the practice of naming polities after peoples was not in itself unusual. Only a wider comparison extending to all regions of the world that supported states in pre-modern times would definitively resolve the issue.

Minoru Inaba on the Lands South of the Hindū Kush

Anyone proposing to invade India has to cross one or other of two formidable barriers: the desert of Makrān or the mountains of Afghanistan, notably the Hindū Kush. The Arab conquerors of Sind in the early eighth century did the first; the Ghaznawids (977–1186), who launched a Muslim conquest of India on a much larger scale around the turn of the millennium, did the second. Minoru Inaba in this paper covers the intervening period, with a focus on the plain that extends from the foothills of the Hindū Kush in the north to the environs of Kābul in the south. This region combined the resources of agriculture, long-distance trade, and the proximity of a silver-mine. The period was not one of dramatic Muslim territorial expansion, and it is poorly covered in our sources. Often the only evidence is numismatic – we are fortunate in the presence of that silver-mine – so that the texture of Inaba's story is rather similar to that of much of the secondary literature on the history of pre-Muslim India. Under these conditions he provides a remarkably clear guide to a notably murky picture. The murk usually arises from the quality of our sources; but sometimes, more interestingly, it may hint at murky realities on the ground.

The broad outline is simple enough. Until the break-up of the 'Abbasid empire in the later ninth century, broadly Indic⁴¹ rule in the region continued more or less undisturbed in the form of a succession of dynasties; there were one or two 'Abbasid incursions, but they had no lasting consequences. It was the regional dynasties that emerged from the break-up of the 'Abbasid empire that began to change things: the Ṣaffārids (861–1003) from the early 870s followed by the Sāmānids (819–1005) from the first decade of the tenth century. Even then it seems that things settled down in such a way that the plain was divided, with Muslims ruling the north and Indic rulers the south. Only with the arrival of Alptigin in Ghazna in the early 960s did dramatic change resume.

41 I use this convenient term to head off questions about the exact ethnic and religious affiliations of these rulers.

A political refugee from a Sāmānid succession dispute, he was the key figure in the chain of events that was to lead to the establishment of the Ghaznawid dynasty. Not coincidentally, he was a Turk; it was the Turks who were about to spearhead the renewed Muslim conquest of India. Meanwhile two numismatic phenomena are sufficiently curious to be worth noting. One is that at the silver-mine it seems that more than one state could mint coins simultaneously. The other is that, in one way at least, the Muslim coins minted there made a drastic concession to indigenous traditions: they were small and thick, in contrast to the silver coins of the wider Muslim world.

Where could we hope to find an appropriate parallel to all this in the Carolingian world? I'm not sure that there is one. The essential features of the situation described by Inaba might be summed up as the following: (a) a large chain of mountains extending from east to west and interspersed with passes; (b) the presence on the northern side of the mountains of a political order – at one time a single state, later a plurality – closely identified with a particular tradition of text-based religion and high culture; (c) the initial presence on the southern side of the mountains of outposts of a different political order, a plurality of states in the period that concerns us and indeed in most periods, but one likewise closely identified with a particular tradition of text-based religion and high culture, though a very different one; (d) a gradual encroachment of the people to the north of the mountains on the territory of the people immediately to the south; (e) an eventual northern conquest reaching far beyond the territory just south of the mountains.

Now the Carolingian empire and its successor states do indeed match features (a) and (b). But the other features are problematic, even if we are prepared to compromise on the points of the compass. To the north and east, the empire did indeed march with lands inhabited by culturally and religiously alien peoples in a way somewhat reminiscent of feature (c), and it did indeed have a tendency to encroach on their territory, as in with feature (d) – though as against feature (e) no large-scale conquest in these directions lay in store. But these alien peoples did not possess high cultures or text-based religions, and with the exception of the Avars in what is now Hungary, their efforts at state-formation in the relevant period were at best incipient and unsteady.⁴² So these populations do not really match feature (c); and in any case the landscape to the north and east was predominantly flat, so we have nothing there resembling feature (a). Things were different to the south where two handsome ranges of mountains stretched from east to west in exactly the manner required by this feature. In the case of the Alps, the Carolingians did indeed

42 Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 472–91, and the summary at 505–7.

conquer a large part of Italy in 773–4, but they were not conquering culturally and religiously alien peoples: the metropolis of their religion and the roots of their high culture – the classical Latin so carefully emulated by Einhard (d. 840) – lay in Italy. The Pyrenees are more promising. There was indeed an alien state, high culture, and text-based religion that dominated Spain in Carolingian times, and the Carolingians did indeed make efforts to conquer territory to the south of the mountains, failing in the west where the indigenous population had no use for them,⁴³ but succeeding in the east where they took Barcelona in 801 and established the Spanish march⁴⁴ – the future Catalonia. And eventually this presence, together with the indigenous kingdoms to the west, would lead on to the Christian reconquest of Spain, though not of North Africa (a limitation that owed much to the sea that lies between them). But the fact that this was a *reconquest* spoils the comparison: most of the people immediately south of the Pyrenees were as Christian as the Carolingians themselves. In short, we don't have a good Carolingian analogy to the process described by Inaba.

What we can do, if we are prepared for a minute to step outside the conventions of this volume, is to flip the Pyrenean comparison and compare Muslims with Muslims: the Muslims pushing south across the Hindū Kush with the Muslims pushing north across (or around) the Pyrenees. In the case of the Pyrenees, they expanded their territory along what is now the coast of southern France, holding Narbonne from 720 to 759, and they repeatedly raided into Aquitaine till worsted at the Battle of Poitiers in 732.⁴⁵ But by the standards of the wider Arab conquests this is not much, and none of it was lasting; there is a dramatic contrast here with the conquest of vast territories in India that came after the expansion described by Inaba.

Perhaps there is a moral to this story. Invaders operating far from their homeland usually do well to co-opt military manpower from warlike populations closer to the field of operations. This is what the Arab conquerors of Sind did not do – there was virtually no one to co-opt in the desert of Makrān. But the Turks did do it: over the centuries they swept up recruits from the mountain tribes of what is now Afghanistan, to such an extent that men from this background eventually appear as rulers in Muslim India.⁴⁶ This helps to ex-

43 Collins, *Early medieval Spain* 250.

44 Collins, *Early medieval Spain* 255.

45 Collins, *Early medieval Spain* 254.

46 Only the beginnings of this process are in evidence under the Ghaznavids (Bosworth, *Ghaznavids* 114). For the period from the late twelfth century to the mid-fifteenth, see Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate* 11, 62, 274, 323. For the rule of the Afghan Lōdīs and Sūrīs in India

plain why the Turkish conquest went so much further than the Arab conquest of Indian territory. If we now turn to the west, the great success of the Arabs was to co-opt Berber military manpower in North Africa and use it to conquer most of Spain, despite the need to cross the straits. By analogy, it seems fair to say that one factor in the poor performance of Muslim armies north of Spain was their failure to co-opt the Basques and other mountain populations of northern Spain. They were just the right kind of people: they were low in social hierarchy,⁴⁷ their graves abounded in weapons, and paganism was still rife among them.⁴⁸ It was the Basques, after all, who defeated or frustrated Frankish expeditions launched against them in the 580s,⁴⁹ who provided troops for the dukes of Aquitaine in their resistance to the Franks in the decades prior to the Carolingian conquest of the 760s,⁵⁰ and who twice inflicted defeat on Frankish forces at Roncesvalles, famously in 778, and once again in 824.⁵¹

Ian Wood on Columbanus and Caesarius

Ian Wood's paper revolves around two religious figures of the Merovingian period. The earlier, Caesarius (d. 542), came from Burgundy. He became a monk in a monastery on an island off the Mediterranean coast, then moved to Arles, where he was appointed bishop in 502, and continued to promote monastic life.⁵² The later figure was a contentious Irishman, Columbanus (d. 615), who spent the last quarter-century of his life on the Continent; he founded monasteries in Burgundy and Lombardy.⁵³ Both of them authored monastic rules, and Wood's primary concern is to show that in this field Columbanus, despite his Irish background, played a leading role in disseminating the legacy of Caesarius.

The paper is not directly concerned with the Carolingian period, but it does indirectly highlight a development in the regulation of monastic life that was to be taken to extremes under Charlemagne and his successor Louis the Pious (ruled 781–840). Back in the days of Caesarius and Columbanus

in the later fifteenth and earlier sixteenth centuries, see Bosworth, *New Islamic dynasties* 301, 304.

47 Wickham, *Conclusiones* 87, summing up the conclusions of several papers in a volume of recent studies of the early medieval Basques. I am indebted to Maribel Fierro for introducing me to recent work on Basque history.

48 Castellanos, Astures, Cantabri, and Vascones 499, 500.

49 Collins, Basques in Aquitaine and Navarre 7.

50 Collins, Basques in Aquitaine and Navarre 11, 12, 13.

51 Collins, Basques in Aquitaine and Navarre 13, 15.

52 Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles*.

53 Herren, *Columbanus*.

no one monastic rule held sway in the lands that were to make up the future Carolingian empire; the Benedictine Rule, composed in central Italy by Benedict of Nursia (d. c. 547), was initially just one of a plurality of competitors.⁵⁴ Through a process the early stages of which figure in Wood's account, it was nevertheless to become the predominant monastic rule in the Carolingian empire. Charlemagne made strong efforts to promote it, and under Louis the Pious it was given a monopoly within the empire in 817. This last development was in considerable measure the result of the lobbying of Benedict of Aniane (d. 821), a Goth at work in the south of France who had the Benedictine Rule by heart.⁵⁵ It was now adopted in a package with his interpretations, modifications, and additions.⁵⁶ The result, according to Benedict's contemporary biographer, was that all monasteries "were returned to a degree of unity as if taught by one teacher in one place."⁵⁷ While this claim was no doubt exaggerated,⁵⁸ it was not till around the twelfth century that the diversity of the later medieval religious orders began to take shape.

As an invitation to Carolingian-ʿAbbasid comparison, monasticism is not in itself very promising: this institution is conspicuously absent from Islam,⁵⁹ and nothing that might be seen as a functional equivalent had developed in the period that concerns us. This is, of course, significant in itself: a large, well-endowed Carolingian monastery was an asset with which you could do several worthwhile things that could not readily be done under the aegis of Islam, and I will come to one of them later. Here, however, there is a broader point that is perhaps worth making.

The first centuries of Islam are a time of great diversity in Islamic thought.⁶⁰ One has to work to find a significant number of doctrinal issues that Muslims agreed on. By contrast, in the Carolingian empire one has to work to find doctrinal issues that the religious elite did not agree on. To put it this way is perhaps to exaggerate a little, but the contrast is unmistakable. It is enhanced by the fact that two of the major controversies in which the Carolingian clerics were involved were disputes in which they fought against outsiders: with the

54 For some further examples, see Prinz, *Askese und Kultur* 21–2.

55 For his memorization of the text see Cabaniss, *Emperor's monk* 53.

56 For a succinct account see Knowles, *Monastic order in England* 25–8; also Deshusses, Benedict of Aniane.

57 Cabaniss, *Emperor's monk* 87.

58 For some indications of the resistance the reform encountered, see Kasten, *Adalhard von Corbie* 91–100.

59 For the explicit rejection of monasticism in Islam, see Wensinck, *Rahbāniyya*.

60 A quick way to get a sense of this diversity is to scan the tables of contents of the first four volumes of van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*.

Spanish in the case of the rejection of adoptionism in the 790s;⁶¹ and with the Byzantines in the case of the insistence on the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son as well as from the Father, again in the reign of Charlemagne.⁶² The controversy over iconoclasm likewise had a foreign provenance – it was, as one Frankish commentator put it, a “controversy of the Greeks” that came to the land of the Franks.⁶³ It is hard to imagine that it would have become a major issue in the Carolingian empire without the stimulus of the Byzantine conflict between iconoclasts and iconodules.⁶⁴ It is true that the debate had strong local resonances and eventually led to serious internal controversy⁶⁵ – though it is tempting to note that by far the most zealous Carolingian iconoclast in both word and deed, Claudius of Turin (d. 827), was a Goth, and so quite likely from Spain.⁶⁶ Perhaps the only purely indigenous heresy of any consequence was that of the cantankerous Gottschalk of Orbais (d. c. 867): a Saxon aristocrat by birth, and an unwilling monk, in the mid-ninth century he gave rise to considerable dissension within the Carolingian elite thanks to his doctrine of double predestination.⁶⁷ Examples of popular heresy are likewise rare.⁶⁸ Overall, while I may well have overlooked something,⁶⁹ the list of Carolingian doctrinal disputes is miniscule by early Islamic standards.

61 Johnson, Adoptionism. Alcuin used the exclusively Spanish character of the heresy to disparage it (Cavadini, *Last Christology of the West* 193–4 n. 81).

62 Meyendorff, Filioque. There was some daylight here between the Carolingian elite and the Pope, but it was about the insertion of the word “filioque” in the text of the creed, not about the doctrine itself.

63 Noble, *Images, iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* 325, quoting Walahfrid Strabo.

64 As Noble puts it, “the surviving sources convey little sense that images represented right away an important or interesting problem for the Franks” (Noble, *Images, iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* 6).

65 Noble, *Images, iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* chapter 7.

66 Noble, *Images, iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* 288–9. As Noble says of Claudius, “No Carolingian writer except Claudius of Turin believed that art works with Christian subject matter could be destroyed” (368; for his removal and destruction of images, see 287). Theodulf of Orléans (d. 821), who played a major role in formulating the Carolingian stance against Byzantine iconodulism at an earlier stage, was likewise a Goth (1, 163).

67 Roberts, Gottschalk of Orbais. He was twice flogged for his persistence in error (Genke and Gumerlock, *Gottschalk and a medieval predestination controversy* 37, 39).

68 For two instances see Brown, *Rise of western Christendom* 421–3, 450 (on Aldebert, a wandering Frankish holy man condemned in 745, and his letter from heaven), 450–1 (the prophetess Thiota who appeared in Mainz in 847 and was duly flogged).

69 I have left aside Amalarius of Metz (d. c. 850) and his allegorical interpretations of the liturgy, derived, as he put it, from “deep within my own spirit” (Stoclet, Amalarius of Metz; Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 417).

Yet the contrast, though striking, is not particularly puzzling. Part of the explanation is chronological. A religious or cultural tradition often experiences great diversity in its early history, gradually losing it as it settles down; thus by Carolingian times the extravagant Gnostic ferment of early Christianity had long disappeared. And part of the explanation is the existence in Christianity, particularly in Western Europe after the time of Constantine, of an organized church that was both shaped and backed by the state – an institution that has no counterpart in Islam. But there is also a third factor that I will take up below.

Robert Gleave on Zayd al-Nār

Robert Gleave's paper on Zayd al-Nār is a study of a bad apple, an incendiary rebel in early-ninth-century Iraq who incurred the wrath of his virtuous brother. Bad apples, of course, are two-a-penny in world history, and a comparativist would have no trouble assembling exemplars of the species from Carolingian Europe. But this Zayd was not just any bad apple. Most inappropriately, he was a member of a holy lineage, a descendant – if at one point in the female line – of none other than the Prophet Muḥammad; and his virtuous brother was the eighth Imām of the Imāmī Shī'ites. In this discordant combination of virtuous ancestry and vicious conduct Zayd was by no means alone among the family of the Prophet. The eleventh Imām's brother Ja'far, variously nicknamed "the Wineskin" and "Ja'far the Liar," was accused of several forms of corrupt behaviour.⁷⁰ Meanwhile in the Hijaz descendants of the Prophet were robbing and killing pilgrims, and even looting the Ka'ba.⁷¹ One of them, a rebel in Medina in the later ninth century, slaughtered and starved the people of Medina, and never once prayed the Friday or congregational prayers while he was there. Worse yet, he profaned the Mosque of the Prophet with his debauchery, drinking wine there openly – in broad daylight – and making love to someone else's singing girl.⁷² All this was unfortunate to say the least, though it was widely believed that one had to cut such delinquent members of the lineage some slack in deference to their ancestor.⁷³

Bad apples in a holy lineage are not as common as bad apples at large, but there is no reason why they should be confined to Islam. The problem could arise in any culture that recognized such a lineage, as with the Brahmins of India or the descendants of Confucius in China. Thus a celebrated Hindu law-

70 Modarressi, *Crisis and consolidation* 70–1, 74–5 and n. 108.

71 Landau-Tasseron, Arabia 406, 408–9, 411.

72 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamhara* 39, cited in Landau-Tasseron, Arabia 409. Abū 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī speaks only of his gruesome death (*Maqātil al-Ṭālibīyyīn* 678).

73 For such indulgence see van Arendonk and Graham, Sharīf 335–6.

book makes provision for the treatment of Brahmins "who are thieves, fallen from their caste, or impotent, or who follow the livelihood of infidels," and specifies the fine to be paid if a Brahmin rapes a Brahmin woman.⁷⁴ Likewise descendants of Confucius who served as magistrates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were accused of misdeeds "including, but not limited to, ... murder by hire, seduction, extortion, and gambling."⁷⁵ But my task in these comments is comparison with Carolingian Europe, and here of course we draw a blank: Western Christianity, like Buddhism, dispensed with holy lineages. Zayd al-Nār could thus have no Carolingian counterpart.

There are nevertheless two questions worth asking about this larger contrast: first, why one culture was marked by the prominence of a holy lineage and the other was not, and second, what difference this may have made.

As to the first question, it seems that in each case the dye was cast at a fairly early stage in the history of the religion in a way that, while it did not determine the future, shaped it profoundly.

In the Christian case, we see the early emergence of a deep suspicion of sex. Jesus remarks, with approval, that "there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matt. 19:12); though it was rare for Christians to take this literally, the figurative message was clear enough. Jesus also told his followers that sex had no place in paradise: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. 22:30). The high valuation of celibacy implied by such statements found eloquent expression in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Marriage might indeed be the best course for many: "if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (1 Cor. 7:9). It was, however, second-best: someone who is unmarried concerns himself with "how he may please the Lord," whereas someone who is married concerns himself with "how he may please his wife" (1 Cor. 7:32–3). Such values were adopted by the leading authorities of the Western church in the succeeding centuries to a greater or lesser extent.⁷⁶ Jerome (d. c. 420) in one of his letters protests

74 Olivelle, *Manu's code of law* 116 (3:150), 187 (8:378).

75 Lamberton, Kongs of Qufu 323–4 (I owe my knowledge of this study, and others in the same volume, to Benjamin Elman); for the magistracy in question see also 326. For shady deals involving land and taxation in which descendants of Confucius engaged see 310–11. None of this went well with the self-image of the lineage; as one member boasted in 1684, "If the way of Confucius has not ceased for even one day, it is because the descendants of Confucius have continued in an unbroken line.... The annals of the lineage are in fact the way of orthodoxy" (299; for the date, see 330).

76 As Peter Brown says of late antique Christian attitudes to sexual renunciation, "There was no single view that had to be defended at all times" (Brown, *Body and society* xlii).

that he has never condemned marriage; he nevertheless praises virginity “to the skies,” for all that he cannot claim it for himself.⁷⁷ Augustine (d. 430) held that the war on carnal concupiscence had to be fought on two fronts: by “the married couple, so that the urge of the flesh may be rightly used,” and by “continent men and virgins, so that, even better and with a struggle of greater glory, it should not be used at all.”⁷⁸

Against this background it is unsurprising that there is nothing in the New Testament to suggest that Jesus at any time in his life had a wife, let alone children; and it was the Christian consensus that he had none. As Tertullian put it, he not only opened the kingdom of heaven to eunuchs, he also “Himself lived as a eunuch.”⁷⁹ Obviously, then, he had no descendants. He did have siblings – four named brothers and an unspecified number of sisters (Mark 6:3). The brothers, it would seem, were married (1 Cor. 9:5). One brother was a significant figure in the early church (Gal. 1:19, 2:9; Acts 15:13), and another had two grandsons who came to the notice of the emperor Domitian (ruled 81–96) and lived into the time of Trajan (ruled 98–117); we are told that thanks to their brush with Domitian they became leaders in the church – but also “because they were of the Lord’s family.”⁸⁰ Yet that seems to be as far as this holy lineage went. Ignatius Loyola (d. 1556), in a challenge to Spanish notions of purity of blood, once said that he would take it as a special grace from our Lord to be of Jewish lineage because he could then be a kinsman “according to the flesh” of Christ and the Virgin Mary⁸¹; this subversive counterfactual highlights the fact that no holy lineage claiming descent from the siblings of Jesus was now to be found in Christianity. In due course the Protestant Reformation ended the cult of celibacy in northern Europe, but it also introduced a religious culture that would have been unsympathetic to the emergence of any holy lineage.

In the Muslim case, by contrast, we see a sweeping rejection of Christian celibacy with its negative attitude to sex.⁸² “Your women,” God says, “are a tillage for you; so come unto your tillage as you wish” (Q2:223). Given that a crucial phase in the rise of Islam turned on its appeal to the warlike tribesmen of Arabia, this very different trajectory need not surprise us; the contrast between the asexual paradise of the Christians and the sexual paradise of the

77 Jérôme, *Lettres* ii, 148 (49:20); for the context see Brown, *Body and society* 377.

78 Brown, *Body and society* 424, from a letter written by Augustine towards the end of his life.

79 Tertullian, *Treatises on marriage* 72–3.

80 Eusebius, *History of the church* 81–2 (3:19–20).

81 Ribadeneyra, *Dicta et facta* 476 §32, cited in Reites, St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Jews 17.

82 For the Islamic rejection of monasticism see again Wensinck, *Rahbāniyya*.

Muslims serves to dramatize the point. Here again initial conditions seem to have shaped the future even if they did not determine it. We might have expected that, as the Muslims began to conquer non-Arab populations among which celibacy ranked high, they would have come under the influence of the attitudes of their new subjects; but by and large this does not seem to have happened.⁸³

All this went well with the figure of a founder who had several more wives than were permitted to any of his followers. Unlike Jesus, Muḥamad had no siblings, but he had seven children and some thirty male paternal cousins.⁸⁴ His children were demographically ill-starred, but one of his daughters married one of his cousins and had offspring; from this marriage stemmed the core of the holy lineage whose members are spread across the Islamic world to this day.⁸⁵

Turning now to the second question, what difference did the contrast make? To the extent that in the Carolingian empire, unlike that of the 'Abbasids, roles of religious leadership were withdrawn from hereditary succession, it surely must have made *some* difference – though doubtless not as much as the presence or absence of a formally organized church. We can, of course, minimize the difference by stressing the ways in which the Muslim and Christian patterns tended to converge. On the one hand hereditary succession, though not excluded in the Muslim context, was not usually a norm there. And on the other hand the Catholic clergy frequently ignored ecclesiastical attempts to impose a celibacy they might consider in violation of ancient custom and common sense,⁸⁶ or skirted such attempts through the practice of nepotism.⁸⁷ There were nevertheless two overlapping Catholic groups

83 The unmarried 'azzāba of North African Ibādism are a rare exception (Rubinacci, *Antico documento* 47, 50, 54).

84 Caskel, *Ġamharat an-nasab* i, tables 4–7.

85 See van Arendonk and Graham, Sharif, and for a recent collection of studies of this holy lineage, with references to earlier studies, Morimoto (ed.), *Sayyids and sharifs*. The geographical dispersion of Muḥammad's descendants is reminiscent of the Brahmins rather than the descendants of Confucius; these latter lived in a concentration around the tomb of their ancestor in Shantung (there were the best part of 11,000 of them there in the late seventeenth century, see Wilson, *Ritualizing Confucius* 71), though from the twelfth century onward there was also a southern branch (66, 69–71, and Lamberton, *Kongs of Qufu* 315–17).

86 Cf. Callam, *Celibacy*.

87 Compare the emergence of patriarchal dynasties based on uncle-to-nephew succession in the Syrian and Armenian churches of later medieval times (Carlson, *Christianity in fifteenth-century Iraq*, chapter 3, section on "Patriarchal inheritance").

that were more exposed to ecclesiastical discipline than the clergy at large: monks because of their concentration in monasteries, and the upper ranks of the religious leadership – bishops and abbots – because of their greater visibility.⁸⁸ I will have some more to say about monasteries when I take up the demise of urban civilization in Western Europe. The point I would like to make here concerns bishops and abbots. To the extent that in Carolingian times these upper ranks were recruited anew in each generation from outside the church, and what is more recruited from the ranks of the aristocracy,⁸⁹ we have here a mechanism absent from the ‘Abbasid context that may have significantly increased the degree of linkage between the political and religious elites.

Some Comparisons of My Own

Identity

Einhard (d. 840) was something unusual, a lay intellectual at the Carolingian court. He was the author of a short but very successful life of Charlemagne that survives in well over a hundred manuscripts.⁹⁰ His introduction to the work is a fine example of false modesty. He laments that his “meager talent, small and insignificant, non-existent almost” is not equal to the task, which would have required “the literary skill of a Cicero.” It is, he confesses, an act of impudence on his part “that I, not a Roman by birth and a man but little versed in the tongue of the Romans, should have imagined that I could compose anything acceptable and suitable in the Latin language.”⁹¹ No one, of course, would have been so uncouth as to take Einhard at his word, a point well understood by his younger contemporary Lupus of Ferrières (d. c. 862), who wrote to tell him that he was overjoyed to find in the book “an elegance of thought” that he

88 Celibacy among bishops and abbots was reinforced by the fact that many of them had been taken into the institutional care of the church in childhood (de Jong, *Imitatio morum* 51, 58, 60).

89 The impression given by the secondary literature is that this was common, if not standard. See Brown, *Rise of western Christendom* 110 for the initial “aristocratization” of the church in fifth-century Gaul, and cf. 111–13, 423, 478; Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 388, and cf. 528; de Jong, *Imitatio morum* 52, 58; McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 43, 84; for aristocratic lay abbots and abbesses see 122, 188, 285. Ebo (or Ebbo), archbishop of Rheims from 816 to 835, was a notable exception, being the son of a royal serf freed by Charlemagne (Brubaker, Ebo of Rheims); this left a hostile source free to denounce him as someone “descended from generations of slaves” whose “ancestors were goatherds” (Thegan, *The deeds of Emperor Louis* 211–13).

90 Tischler, *Einhard's Vita Karoli* i, 20–44.

91 Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* 52.

had previously found only in the works of the ancients.⁹² So once we strip away the false modesty, we see that in effect Einhard was boasting that a man can be blond and blue-eyed and yet write in a stylish classical Latin. For a barbarian he had come a long way, and had good reason to be pleased with himself. But there is another way we could look at it: with his fixation on the literary language of dead brown males – and worse yet, pagan ones – how much had he really done for blond pride?

Let us try mapping Einhard onto the cultural life of the 'Abbasid empire. We would have to imagine an Arab writing a life of Charlemagne's contemporary the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd in Greek, declaring the assignment to require the literary skill of a Plutarch, and apologizing for his presumption in attempting to write in the language when he was not himself a Greek by birth. But of course such a scenario is utterly counterfactual. It was not Greek but Arabic that served as the literary language of the early centuries of Islam; Greek was at most a forgotten language from which a limited body of texts – scientific and philosophical – were deemed worth translating into Arabic. There was thus no tension in the 'Abbasid context between the language of high culture and the language of those who wielded political power. Nor, outside the domain of poetry, was there much tension between the prevailing religion and the religious affiliations of the authors whose works could be reckoned to be models of Arabic style. In these respects the whole structure of the culture served the cause of Arab pride: it was *their* state, *their* religion, and *their* culture.⁹³ Those who wrote Arabic without being Arabs themselves were the clients of the Arabs, not their rulers. We would have to await the Iranian intermezzo and the coming of the Turks to find a situation that even partially matched that of Carolingian Europe.

This is not to say that Frankish pride found no expression in Carolingian times. Charlemagne wore the national dress of the Franks, hated that of other countries, and only made concessions on this score on two occasions when he was entreated to do so by the Pope.⁹⁴ The glorious legend of the Trojan origin of the Franks is already attested in late Merovingian times.⁹⁵ To judge by the names one encounters in reading the secondary literature, a

92 Dutton, *Charlemagne's courtier* 167; also McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 211. Lupus was introducing himself and asking a favor.

93 "Our religion and the state are both Arab" (*dīnunā wa'l-dawla 'Arabiyyān*), as the Khwārazmian Bīrūnī (d. c. 1050) still affirmed in his *Ṣaydana*, 12 of the Arabic text.

94 Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* 77–8.

95 Wallace-Hadrill, *Long-haired kings* 79–83. The catalog of the library of the monastery of Reichenau, dating from 821, lists a treatise on the origin of the Trojans (McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 158–9).

Germanic onomastic repertoire continued to predominate with little admixture from classical or Biblical sources – apart from the nicknames that Alcuin (d. 804) conferred on fellow-members of the court.⁹⁶ Einhard likewise tells us how Charlemagne directed “that the age-old narrative poems, barbarous enough, it is true, in which were celebrated the warlike deeds of the kings of ancient times, should be written out and so preserved”; he adds to this that Charlemagne began a grammar of his native tongue.⁹⁷ Nothing has survived from either of these projects – very much in contrast to our substantial corpus of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and the grammatical tradition of Sibawayh and so many others. Nor was there any antiquarian literature on Frankish – or more broadly Germanic – antiquities to compare with the avid transmission of information on the manners and customs of the pagan Arabs. The Carolingian elite knew the ancient term “Germany” (*Germania*),⁹⁸ and demonstrably had some awareness that the Franks were part of a wider set of Germanic peoples;⁹⁹ in the first years of the ninth century they were involved in a rather contentious cult of Theodoric the Ostrogoth (ruled 489–526), with Charlemagne having what was believed to be a statue of this Arian heretic erected at his palace in Aachen.¹⁰⁰ But these trends had their limits. One way to characterize the culture of the Carolingian elite would be in terms of its relations with the *Germania* of Tacitus, a little book of the late first century that was to become a sensation in the Renaissance. Carolingian monks preserved the text for us,¹⁰¹ and one ninth-century Carolingian author, with a fine

96 For a couple of Judiths see McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 169, 194–5; for Louis the Blind’s son Charles Constantine, see 265. For Alcuin’s nicknames see 162.

97 Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* 82. Carolingian libraries did contain some vernacular texts (see McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 158–9, 202, 204, 209–10; and for translations into Old High German see 298). One of them is the *Heliand*, an epic account of the life of Jesus in Old Saxon that is suffused with traditional Saxon martial values (see McLintock, *Heliand* 150). But for the most part these texts did not preserve pre-Christian Germanic traditions. The exceptions are sixty-eight lines of epic poetry that survive fortuitously in a Fulda manuscript and a charm that mentions several pagan deities (Edwards, *German vernacular literature* 150–2, 166–7).

98 Innes, *Teutons or Trojans?* 232.

99 Innes, *Teutons or Trojans?* 233–4. A world chronicle of the first half of the ninth century affirms the common origin of the Franks, Goths, and other *nationes theodiscae*; Gottschalk spoke of a single *gens theodisca*.

100 Innes, *Teutons or Trojans?* 241–4.

101 For the lost Carolingian manuscript of the work, perhaps dating from the second quarter of the ninth century, and to which we owe our fifteenth-century copies, see Much, *Germania des Tacitus* 23–4.

disregard for anachronism, borrowed passages from it in composing an account of the recent past of the Saxons.¹⁰² But we have no indication that any Carolingian scholar ever got excited about it.

The Collapse of Urban Civilization

The phrase "urban civilization" sounds a bit pleonastic; one is tempted to say that civilization is urban by etymology, if not by definition. But historically speaking, high cultures have not been confined to urban settings, and Carolingian Europe is an excellent example of this fact. Teeming cities are not a theme we encounter in the secondary literature on the period, even in the context of economic revival.¹⁰³ Carolingian kings lived largely in the countryside,¹⁰⁴ and much of the infrastructure of high culture consisted of monasteries that were likewise located there. Towards the end of the eighth century Charlemagne established a new capital at Aachen, but just what it amounted to is not very clear. One historian has described it as a compact affair set in the countryside, contrasting it with Byzantine and Islamic capitals;¹⁰⁵ to borrow the language of the Mesoamericanists, this suggests something more like a ceremonial center than a city. Another historian, by contrast, likens it to "a modern third-world 'mushroom town,'" "an urban site" with "a relatively large and dense population"

102 See Wetzel, *Translatio S. Alexandri* especially 4, 12–13, and the presentation of the texts in parallel given in the unpaginated appendix at the end of the work; likewise Önnertfors in his edition of the *Germania* prints the relevant passages from the *Translatio* at the foot of the page (Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber* 4, 7, 8, 9). The *Translatio* is about the transfer of the relics of a certain St Alexander from Rome to Wildeshausen in Saxony in 851, but it opens with an account of the pagan Saxons and the Frankish campaigns that led to their conversion. The identity of the author responsible for putting this account together is disputable: a later-ninth-century letter of Meginhard of Fulda included with the *Translatio* identifies him as Rudolf of Fulda (d. 865), whereas the eleventh-century chronicler Adam of Bremen has him to be Einhard. Wetzel is unusual among modern scholars in arguing for Einhard. The rival claims are not necessarily irreconcilable: could Einhard not have assembled the account in a work plagiarized by Rudolf and still available to Adam, but now lost?

103 See the remarks of McCormick in his introduction to Pirenne, *Medieval cities* xv, xx, xxiii; also McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 21, and Verhulst, *Carolingian economy* 22, 72, 91–3, 133–4. A recent survey concludes: "Archaeological evidence for craft working suggests that the decisive upturn in the curve of the development of the early European town did not occur until the tenth century" (Henning, *Early European towns* 31).

104 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 21. The best parallel to this in the Islamic world would be nomad rule in the northern Middle East from the eleventh century onwards.

105 Brown, *Rise of western Christendom* 435.

and “a diversified economic base.”¹⁰⁶ What the sources tell us is that in addition to the palace and the mansions of the political elite, lay and ecclesiastical, Aachen boasted merchants and a market, together with beggars and paupers.¹⁰⁷ But this is hardly enough to show that it was an urban center in its own right. Even the historian who regards it as an urban site argues, if only from the loud silence of the sources, for the demise of Aachen in the course of the Carolingian collapse of the late ninth century.¹⁰⁸ At the same time the institutional structure within which high culture was contained displayed a thoroughly top-down character: on the one hand there was the royal court, and on the other hand bishoprics and monasteries subject to the combined authority of an organized church and a state with a strong commitment to regulation.

Those two factors make the Carolingian situation very different from that obtaining in the ‘Abbasid empire. There cities did indeed teem, not least the imperial capital of Baghdad; though like Aachen it was founded by a ruler, it remained a great city even in the decades from 836 to 892 when the Caliphs moved their capital elsewhere. Meanwhile there was an almost complete lack of effective top-down institutions of cultural control in the ‘Abbasid empire. One might have expected that at least within a purpose-built capital like Baghdad, the population would have been more or less on the same page – the Caliph’s page. But a ninth-century Muslim author commenting on the ruler-friendly character of the city stressed not the homogeneity of the population but rather its diversity: all the various religio-political trends were represented there, and the net effect was that they canceled out.¹⁰⁹ So by Carolingian standards the cities of the ‘Abbasid empire were not just teeming, they were also culturally undisciplined, not to say chaotic. The one serious attempt at cultural orchestration, the inquisition (Miḥna) begun by the Caliph Ma’mūn in 833, was a notable failure.

Two major points come out of this contrast. The first is that if your cultural preference is for diversity, innovation, instability, and clever people pursuing idiosyncratic ideas, then the ‘Abbasid empire wins the competition. Perhaps the wildest thing on the elite cultural scene of the Carolingian empire was

106 Nelson, Aachen as a place of power 219, 224. Davis, by contrast with either author, stresses the degree of our ignorance (*Charlemagne’s practice of empire* 327).

107 For the market and merchants, see Nelson, Aachen as a place of power 223, 238 no. 2; for the beggars and paupers, see 239 no. 7.

108 Nelson, Aachen as a place of power 234.

109 Van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra* iii, 9.

the neo-Platonism of John Scottus Eriugena (d. c. 877),¹¹⁰ and that was tame enough by 'Abbasid standards. If, however, you put a premium on a degree of cultural homogeneity and stability, the Carolingian empire may suit you better. The second point is that when it comes to preserving culture, as opposed to creating it, teeming and undisciplined cities are not much help: the cultural artifacts they generate are too dangerously exposed to the vicissitudes of time. Nothing, of course, is immune to them, but a Carolingian monastic library may be as good a vehicle of cultural preservation as one can hope for. It is largely thanks to these monasteries that we possess some 7,000 Latin codices copied in Western Europe in the ninth century, mostly written in the Frankish kingdoms.¹¹¹ With these come a dozen library catalogs¹¹² and well over a thousand charters issued by Carolingian rulers.¹¹³ There are even Carolingian libraries still preserved *in situ*.¹¹⁴ By contrast, Charlemagne in his will decreed that "the great collection of books which he has made in his library" should be sold to anyone who wanted them, and the money given to the poor.¹¹⁵ It was the church, not the palace, that preserved those thousands of codices for us.

It is hard for a historian of the medieval Islamic world to read about Carolingian monasteries without an acute sense of envy. If there had been comparable Muslim monasteries, and we could have put the books catalogued by the Baghdadi book-seller Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 990) into them, we would know vastly more about the cultural scene of the early Islamic centuries than we can ever hope to do.¹¹⁶

110 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 288.

111 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 11–12.

112 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 200. Of these, three are catalogs of the libraries of cathedrals, and seven of those of monasteries. For a more detailed survey, see McKitterick, *Carolingians and the written word*, 169–96. By contrast, our earliest library catalog for the Islamic world is the Qayrawān catalog of 1294 (Kohlberg, *Medieval Muslim scholar at work* 74 n. 28).

113 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 83, 333–4.

114 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 204; cf. also 202, 206.

115 Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* 89. McKitterick suggests that Louis the Pious may not have implemented this provision of his father's will, though there is no conclusive evidence of this (*Frankish kingdoms* 159–60).

116 Consider what the library of St Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai does for the history of eastern Christianity (a point I owe to Jack Tannous). It is, for example, thanks to the preservation of a palimpsest in this library that we now possess an understanding of the Caucasian Albanian language.

Problems of Royal Succession

As we saw above, the balance of power between rulers and aristocrats was considerably more favorable to the aristocracy in the Carolingian than in the 'Abbasid case. There are doubtless profound reasons for this contrast, but I will confine myself to two points. Both are about the problems that arise from rulers having, or not having, heirs.

The first problem arises when a ruler leaves more than one potential heir. There are various ways to solve this problem, one of which is to divide the realm and give each a share. This was something the Carolingians did repeatedly and the 'Abbasids only once, when Hārūn al-Rashīd divided the empire between his sons Amīn and Ma'mūn – an ill-fated arrangement ended by civil war within a few years of his death in 809. As it happens the two divergent patterns are not part of a wider contrast between European and Muslim dynasties: in each case some dynasties countenanced division, while others did not. But as between the Carolingians and the 'Abbasids, the contrast is sharp.¹¹⁷ It meant that Carolingian royal power was liable to be frittered away,¹¹⁸ whereas 'Abbasid Caliphal power was not – or at least not in this way. The same process could no doubt affect individual aristocratic families, but not the aristocracy collectively.

The second problem arises when a ruler has no legitimate heir. This involves women. In this respect Western Christendom did not differ from the civilized world of the day only in the lifestyle it permitted its women, though that was contrast enough – they were free-range, they participated in the hunt, they might take lovers in the manner of Charlemagne's beautiful daughters.¹¹⁹ What concerns us more here is that accepted social norms had come to impose monogamy on royal families.¹²⁰ This did not prevent a ruler from making promis-

117 For Carolingian divisions, see McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 32–3, 53, 72, 136, 171, 172f, 176, 179. There was Merovingian precedent, see 17.

118 As Wickham puts it, "There had always been too many Carolingians, given the presumption of political division the family had inherited from the Merovingian past" (*Inheritance of Rome* 401).

119 Their relationships and illegitimate offspring are delicately alluded to in Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* 75; and see the more concrete information supplied by the translator, 185 n. 55. The fault was Charlemagne's – for political reasons he did not allow his daughters to marry. Note also that at court the chamberlain was primarily responsible to the queen (McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 79).

120 This was a recent development: the Carolingians themselves had been polygamous in the days when they were mayors of the palace (Wemple, *Women in Frankish society* 40, and cf. 77).

cuous use of concubine and bride, but it did crucially mean that at any one time only one woman could give him a legitimate heir – and if she did not deliver, it had become much harder to put her away and marry another.¹²¹ A Muslim ruler, by contrast, could have four disposable wives and an unlimited number of concubines, and all their off-spring would be legitimate;¹²² under these conditions a ruler without an heir had only himself to blame. European rulers, by contrast, were playing Russian roulette with dynastic succession. The Carolingian ruler for whom this problem notoriously came home to roost was Lothair II (ruled 855–69), who spent much of his reign making desperate attempts to dissolve his marriage to his childless wife in order to legitimate his son by another woman.¹²³ He was by no means the only Carolingian ruler to die leaving no male heir.¹²⁴ Of course in a more favorable political situation, with his uncles and the Pope on his side, the problem could have been solved by finding some ground for annulling the marriage – just as with the Pope on his side Henry VIII (ruled 1549–47) could have had his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled, and England could have remained a Catholic country. But among Muslim ruling families there would have been no need for favorable political conditions to make it possible to solve such a problem; the problem would never have arisen in the first place. This contrast too must have played out to the collective advantage of the Carolingian aristocracy. How and why Western European royal families allowed themselves to be backed into a corner in which they were so acutely vulnerable to reproductive bad luck would no doubt make an interesting story.

In conclusion, let me say that given my lack of any but a superficial knowledge of Carolingian history, I have probably been getting a lot of it wrong. This is, so to speak, the view from the back of the elephant. But in a comparative context it is just possible that, as with a medieval traveler, what I get wrong may sometimes be more interesting than what I get right. And either way, a lot more could be done with these and other comparative themes.

121 For the increasingly indissoluble character of marriage in the Carolingian period see Stone, *Morality and masculinity* 269–73.

122 The difference between being the son of a wife and the son of a concubine was one of social prestige, not legitimacy.

123 McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 178–9.

124 Charles the Fat abdicated in 887 and died soon after leaving only an illegitimate son (McKitterick, *Frankish kingdoms* 262; and see Wickham, *Inheritance of Rome* 401–2).

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Index

- Aachen 21n, 22n, 90, 214, 215, 216
 ‘Abbasid(s), ‘Abbasid Caliphate 52, 92, 93, 115, 116, 123, 125, 137, 138, 140, 169–170, 171, 173, 174, 182, 183
 Abbots 17, 28
 ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥasanwayh 63, 64, 65
 ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Ḥasanwayh, Abū l-Qāsim 59, 61
 ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Windād 54
 ‘Abdallāh b. Samura 123
 About, Edmond 195
 Abū l-‘Abbās, elephant 92, 93, 103n
 Abū ‘Īsā (the Kurd) Abū ‘Īsā b. Badr b. Ḥasanwayh 56n
 Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābi’ (vizier) 59
 Abū l-Faṭḥ b. Ibn al-‘Amīd (vizier) 58, 58n
 Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad (‘Alī al-Hādī) 171
 Abū Naṣr al-Bukhārī 172
 Abū al-Qāsim al-Khūṭī 183
 Abū al-Sarāya 169, 170, 171, 183
 Adalbert-Atto, Count of Canossa 196
 Adalhard of Corbie, abbot and *missus* 18–23, 25, 26, 27–29, 31, 32, 37, 39, 40
 Adhkā’ī, Parwīz 53, 53n
 adoptionism 207
 ‘Aḡud al-Dawla Fannākhusrāw b. Rukn al-Dawla 53, 59, 60–66, 67, 68, 69
 Aethelheard of Canterbury 103, 105, 106
 Aetherius, bishop of Lyon 154, 156, 161
 Afghan Boundary Commission 127n, 128n, 131, 131n, 135
 Afghanistan 123, 124, 126n, 130, 131, 141n, 143n, 202, 204
 Agobard of Lyons 112
ahl al-Bayt 172–180
ahl al-fasād (“wrongdoers”) 63
 Alcuin 102–106, 207n, 214
 identifies as *alienus* 102, 106
 The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York 105
 Life of St. Vedast 104
 Life of St. Willibrord 102, 103
 nicknames 102
 opinion on mission to the Saxons 104
 Alemanni 107, 110
 Alemannia 116
 Aleppo 116
 ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā 170, 171, 172, 173–180, 181, 182, 183
 ‘Alī Tegin 136
 ‘Alī al-Urayḍī b. Ja’far al-Ṣādiq 170
alienus, alienigena 102, 106
 allocation 55
 Alps 110, 196, 197, 203
 Alptegin 123, 136, 140, 142, 143, 144, 202
 Alsace 111
amān 58, 66
 St. Amand, monastery 28
 Al-Amīn, caliph 79, 169
 ‘Amr b. al-Layth 140
 Amu Darya 139n
 Angles, *gens Anglorum* 102, 103, 105
 Anglo-Saxons 102, 103, 105, 108
 Annals of Lorsch 16n, 32
 Andarāb 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140n
 Angilbert of St. Riquier/Centula, lay abbot and courtier 18n, 40
 Antiphony of Bangor 159
 appanage 55
 appointment deed 56, 61
 Aquitaine 31n, 109, 111, 115, 116, 204, 205
 Aridius, bishop of Lyon 154, 161
 Aristocracy, aristocrat(s) 17, 19n, 23, 26, 27, 28, 33n, 193, 212, 218, 219
 Arles 205
 Arles, nunnery 158–9, 161, 164
 Armenia, Armenians 115, 116, 194
 Arn of Salzburg, archbishop 18, 23–29, 30, 31, 32, 37, 40, 41, 193
 Aryans 200
‘aṣabiyya (“group solidarity”) 57
 ‘Āṣim b. Ḥasanwayh 63, 64, 65
 Ashurbanipal, Assyrian king 76
 “The Astronomer” 82–83, 85, 87, 88
 Athala, abbot of Bobbio 162–3
 Augustine 210
 Aunarius/Aunacharius, bishop of Auxerre 154
 Aurelian, bishop of Arles, *Rule* 156, 159
 Auxerre 154
 Avars 104, 106, 115, 203

- Bābur, Ẓahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad 134, 135, 136
- Badakhshān 138
- Badr b. Ḥasanwayh 52, 53, 53n, 56, 56n, 60, 61, 61n, 63–66, 67, 68, 69
- Baghdad 52, 79, 85, 87, 169, 170, 171, 179, 216, 217
- Bahā' al-Dawla Fīrūz b. 'Aḍud al-Dawla (Būyid) 67
- Bahrām Gūr 79, 94, 198
- Bajgah Pass 133
- Bakhtiyār b. Ḥasanwayh 62
- Balkh 135, 136, 138n
- Bāmiyān 125, 126, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 142, 146
- Banijūrids (Abū Dā'udids) 138, 139, 140, 142
- Barmakids 125, 126n
- Barzikān(i) (Kurds) 53, 53n, 54, 56, 56n, 64, 66, 195, 196
- Basghūrfand 126n
- Basques 205
- Başra 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 178, 179, 181, 192
- Baudonivia, *Life of Radegund* 158
- Bavaria, Bavarians 23, 24, 26, 27, 28n, 29, 31, 107, 110, 111, 113, 115, 116
- Bayhaqī, Abū al-Faḍl 132, 133, 134, 136
- Bāzarak Pass 134, 135
- Begrām 128, 129, 130, 131, 134
- Benedict, Rule of 155, 165, 206
- Benedict of Aniane 164, 206
- Benedict of Nursia 205
- benefit (s. *ni'ma*) 57, 66
- Bernard of Italy, king 20
- al-Birūnī, Abū Rayḥān 129, 134
- Bitlisī 53
- Bobbio 161, 162
- Bohemians 116
- Böritegin 136
- Bosworth, Clifford Edmund 52, 125n, 133n
- Bribery 17, 32, 40n
- Britons 105
- Brittany 111, 116
- Britto vel Scoto* 103
- Brunṭayh 132
- Bully, Sébastien 157
- Bürgel, Johann Christoph 53, 63
- Burgundy, Burgundians 110, 111, 112, 165, 205
- Busse, Heribert 53
- Bust 130, 143
- Būyid(s) (dynasty) 52, 53, 55, 57, 57n, 59, 62, 65, 67, 68, 116, 201
- Caesarius, bishop of Arles 154–5, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 205
- Rule for Monks* 156, 160, 165
- Rule for Nuns* 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 165
- Sermons* 159, 160, 161
- Sermons*, manuscripts of 161–2, 163, 164
- Canossa 196
- Cassian, John, *Institutes* 164
- caliph 52, 60, 61, 64
- capitulary/capitularies 16, 17n, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30n, 32–40
- Carduchia 194–5
- castle 52, 53–55, 59, 63, 65, 66
- freehold castle 53–55, 66
- Catherine of Aragon 219
- celibacy 211
- Chaghāniyān 139n
- Chaghatay Khān(ate) 132, 141, 142
- Chārikār 130, 131
- Charlemagne 13–21, 23–33, 34n, 35–37, 38n, 39–41, 85, 86, 87n, 90, 91n, 92, 93, 104, 105, 107, 109, 111, 112, 191–3, 194, 205, 206, 207, 212, 213, 214, 217, 218
- Charles the Bald 113
- Charles Martel 15n
- Chlothar II 158
- Claudius, bishop of Turin 207
- Clovis I 103
- Columbanus 153–168, 205
- Columbanus, *Instructiones* 159, 165
- Columbanus, *Rules of* 155, 157, 159
- compact (s. also covenant) 60, 63, 69
- Conon, abbot of Lérins 163
- Constantinople 73, 81, 88
- Continuations of Fredegar 108
- court, courtier, courtly 58, 59, 60, 60n, 66, 68, 69
- covenant (s. also compact) 59
- Croats 116
- Dandānaqān 141
- Danes 108, 116

- Daylamites 116
 Daysam b. Ghānim 54, 57
 de Vogüé, Dom Adalbert 160, 164
 Dharmagupta 130
 Diem, Albrecht 163, 164
 Dinawar 54, 56n
 Donatus, bishop of Besançon, Rule 165
 Dynamius, *patricius* 163

Ecclesia 105, 110
Ecclesia Anglorum 103
 Egypt 115
 Einhard 204, 212–14, 215n
 Vita Caroli 110
Eltābār (see also *Rutbīl*) 124
Engilsaxo 103, 106
 England 104, 116
 Eriugena, John Scottus 217
Eusebius Gallicanus 159

 Faḍl b. Yaḥyā 125, 126
 Fakhr al-Dawla ‘Alī b. Rukn al-Dawla
 (Būyid) 56n, 62, 64n
 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī 172
 Fars 52, 55, 59, 61
 Faustus, bishop of Riez 159
 Ferreolus, bishop of Uzès, *Rule* 156
 First Letter of Peter (1 Peter) 103
 Florentius, *Life of Rusticula* 158–9
Filioque controversy 19
 fiscal autonomy 58n
 Fondūqistān 127, 128
 fortress (s. castle) 62, 63, 64, 66, 67
 fostering (s. *iṣṭināʿ*) 64, 65, 67
 Fragner, Bert 52
Franci (see also *Franks*) 108, 109, 110
Francia 85, 86, 87, 88, 92, 93, 102, 109
 Franks (see also *Franci*, *gens*
 Francorum) 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112,
 115, 115, 205, 207, 213, 214
 Frankish identity 103, 105, 106, 108
 freehold (castle, property) 53–55, 59, 61, 65,
 66–67
frenkisk 114, 115
 From Kesar (Kābulshāh) 124, 125
 Frisia, Frisians 102, 107, 111
 Fulda 33n, 39, 214n, 215n

 game parks 93
 Gandhāra 124, 127, 137n
 Gaul 103, 104, 116
gens, gentes 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114, 115,
 116
gens Francorum (see also *Franci*, *Franks*)
 103, 108, 114
gens sancta 103, 105
 Ghānim b. Aḥmad 54, 55, 56n, 57
 Gharchistān 140
 Ghaznavids 123, 132, 134n, 141, 142, 143, 144n,
 146, 202, 203, 204n
 Ghazni/Ghazna 132, 141n, 142n, 143, 144n,
 202
 Ghorband (Ghūrward) 125n, 126, 127, 128
 Ghūzak 133, 134
 Gnostic, Gnosticism 208
 Goth(s) (see also *Ostrogoths*, *Visigoths*) 105,
 107, 206, 207, 214n
 Gottschalk of Orbais 207
 gratitude (s. *shukr*) 65, 68, 69
 Gregory, bishop of Langres 163
 Gregory, bishop of Tours 153–4, 156, 158, 161,
 163
 Gregory I (the Great), pope 103, 154, 163
 Gregory VII, pope 196

Hadith 183
 Hamadān 53, 54, 58, 61, 62, 66
 al-Hamdānī, Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 139
 Hamdanids 116
 Hardrad, count 39
 Hārūn al-Rashīd 19n, 79, 85, 86, 87n, 90, 92,
 125, 169, 192, 194, 213, 218
 Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, Imām 176, 178, 185
 al-Ḥasan Ibn Sahl (vizier) 171, 179
 al-Ḥasan al-Shīr 125
 al-Ḥasan al-Washāʾ 175, 176
 Hasanuyids 116
 Ḥasanwayh b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kurdī 52ff,
 194–6
Heerfolge 60
Heliand 214n
 Henry IV, emperor 196
 Henry VIII 219
 Hincmar 83
 Hispania 116

- Hindūkush 123, 125, 126, 128, 129, 131–139,
143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 202, 204
- Hindūshāh 142–146
- Holy Ghost
 Doctrine of Double Procession of 207
- Honoratus, abbot of Lérins 163
- household
 patrimonial household 68
- Ḥulwān 60
- Hungarians 116
- Hunna, abbot of Réomé 161
- Al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, Imām 174, 175, 176, 177,
178, 185
- Ibn al-‘Amīd (vizier) 54, 57, 58
- Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq 171, 173, 176, 178,
179, 181
- Ibn Baṭṭūta, Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad
132, 135, 142n
- Ibn Ḥawqal, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad
129, 143, 144n
- Ibn al-Nadīm 217
- Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm
169
- Ibrāhīm b. Jibrīl 125, 135, 140
- Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī 171, 179
- Ibrahim b. Mūsā al-Jazzār 170
- iḥsān* (s. *nīma*) 57
- imāma* 175, 181
- Imāmī Shī‘ites 169–186, 208
- Imperial coronation 16, 25
- ‘Imrān b. Shāhīn 61
- imtilāk* (“transfer of property”) 64
- inhāza, inḥiyāz* (“changing sides”) 63n
- iqṭā’* 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66–68
- Iran, Iranians 77, 116
- Iraq 169, 172, 179, 208
- Ireland 102, 155, 157, 159, 160, 162
- ‘Ishāniya (Kurds) 54
- Ismā‘īl b. Aḥmad Sāmānī 140
- India(n) 131n, 141n, 143, 202, 203, 204, 205,
208
- istahaqqqa, istiḥqāq* (“deserving”) 57, 64
- al-Iṣṭakhrī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad 129,
138
- iṣṭinā’* (“fostering”, “favouring”) 67, 68
- Italy 14n, 20–23, 25, 26, 27, 31, 36n, 73, 94,
204, 206
- ‘Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār b. Mu‘izz al-Dawla
(Būyid) 53, 59–62, 63, 65, 68
- Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq 170, 174, 177
- Jalāl al-Dīn Mankbirmī 132, 134
- Jerome 209
- Jibāl 55, 62
- John, abbot of Réomé 163
- Jonas of Bobbio
 Life of Columbanus 153, 155, 156–7, 160–1,
162–3
 Life of John of Réomé 158, 161–2, 163
 author of the *Regula cuiusdam patris ad
 virgines?* 165
- Kābul/ Kābul river 123n, 124, 125n, 126, 129,
132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 138n, 142–144, 202
- Kābulshāh 123–124, 125, 126, 128, 137, 143
- Khalaj 123
- Khār 140
- Khawāk Pass 131, 132, 134, 135
- khidma* (“service”) 57, 58n, 60n, 64, 65n
- Khurāsān, Khurāsānian 54, 55, 56, 124, 132,
136, 140, 147, 169, 170, 192
- khuṭba* (“Friday sermon”) 61n
- Koh Dāman 125n, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 144
- Krusch, Bruno 159, 160
- Kufa/al-Kūfa 169, 171, 174, 177, 182, 185, 192
- Kurd(s), Kurdish 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 62, 63, 64,
66, 67, 68, 115, 116
- Kurdistān 195, 196
- Lagatūrman 137
- Leges Langobardorum* 111
- Lex Burgundionum* 111
- Lex Francorum Chamavorum* 112
- Lex Gundobada* 112
- Lex Ribuariorum*, Ribuarian law 111, 115
- Lex Salica*, Salian law 109, 111, 115
- Leo III, pope 19n, 23n, 25
- Lérins 154–5, 158, 161, 162–3, 165
- Leubovera, abbess of Poitiers 158
- Liber Historiae Francorum* 109
- Lindisfarne 103
- lingua theodisca*. See *theodisk*
- Liutprand/Liudprand of Cremona 74, 76, 81,
90n, 92, 93, 94, 110, 198
- Loire 109

- Lombard(s), Lombardy 14n, 21, 27, 74, 102,
 108, 110, 114, 115, 116, 205
 Lord, lordship 52ff
 Lothair II 219
 Lotharingia, Lotharingians 110, 111, 116
 Louis the German 84, 89, 113
 Louis the Pious, emperor 15, 18n, 31, 82, 83,
 84, 85, 86, 87, 91, 92, 192, 205, 206, 217n
 Lowe, E.A. 161
 loyalty 58
 Lupus of Ferrières 212, 213n
 Luxeuil 154–5, 157, 161, 162, 164, 165
 Lyon 154

 Al-Mahdi, 'Abbāsid caliph 79
 Al-Ma'mūn, 'Abbāsid caliph 169, 170, 171, 172,
 173, 174, 178, 179, 181, 216
 Al-Manṣūr, 'Abbāsid caliph 78n, 85
 Manṣūr b. Nūḥ 141
 Martin, bishop of Tours 155
 Marw/Marv 123, 170
 Marwanids 116
 Mas'ūd b. Maḥmūd 133, 136, 141
 Matilda of Tuscany 196
 Mawdūd b. Mas'ūd 141
 McCormick, Michael 85
 Mecca 65, 169n, 170, 192
medicamenta paenitentiae 160, 162
 Medina 170, 171, 176, 185, 192, 208
 Merovingians 41
Mihna 216
Missi, missatica 13–41, 191–3
 Moravians 116
 Morin, Dom Germain 160
 Moses 102
 Mosul 116
 Mottahedeh, Roy 64, 65, 67, 68
 Mu'ayyid al-Dawla Būya b. Rukn al-Dawla
 (Būyid) 66
al-muḥaddith 172, 183
 Muḥammad, Prophet 169, 171, 172, 175, 176,
 178, 179, 180, 182, 208, 211n
 Muḥammad al-Bāqir 183
 Muḥammad al-Dībāj 170
 Muḥammad b. Ja'far al-Dībāj 170
 Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī 182
 al-Muqaddasī, (Muḥammad b. Aḥmad 129,
 138

muqṭa' (s. *iqṭā'*) 60
 Mūsā al-Kāzīm 173, 174, 177, 178
 Al-Mu'taṣim, caliph 79
 Al-Mutawakkil, caliph 171

Naqīb 172
 Narbonne 161–2, 204
 Naṣr b. Aḥmad 138, 141, 146
 Nicephorus 73, 81, 110
 Nihāwand 54
ni'ma (s. also *iḥsān*) ("benefit") 57, 66
 nobles, nobility (see also aristocracy) 57, 61
 nomads, nomadic 52, 55, 56
 Normandy, Normans 116
 Northumbria 102, 103
 Notker the Stammerer 198
 Nūḥ b. Naṣr 141

 oath, oath-taking 14, 25n, 37, 38, 67
 obeisance 65
 onager, hunting of 73–101, 197–8
 Ostrogoth(s) 115, 214
 Otfrid of Weißenburg 114
 Otto I of Saxony, emperor 73, 91, 110

 Paghmān mountains 125n, 130
 Panjhīr 126n, 130, 132, 134, 135n, 138, 139, 140,
 144, 146
 Panjshīr 125n, 126, 130, 135, 136, 142
 Parwān 128–134, 135n, 138, 139, 140–142, 144,
 146
Patria 102, 111, 113, 114
 Paul the Deacon 102
 Paulinus of Aquileia 113
 penitentials 153, 162
 Persians 115
 Peter of Pisa 102
 Picts 105
 Pippin III 85, 86, 88, 95, 108, 109, 198
 Pippin of Italy, king 20
 Placitum of Rīzana 112
 Poitiers, battle of 204
 Poitiers, nunnery of the Holy Cross 156, 158,
 161, 164
 Poitiers, nuns of, letter to 156
 Poles 116
populus Christianus 110
 Porcarius, abbot of Lérins, *Monita* 164

- Prinz, Friedrich 155, 165
 protection money 56
 Provence 111, 116, 156, 160, 163, 165

 Qarakhānids 136
 Qaşr ‘Amra 80

 Rabanus Maurus 83, 84, 87, 88, 90
 Radegund of Poitiers 156, 158
 Rayy 52, 55, 59, 62
 Regino of Prüm 114
regnum Francorum, rex Francorum 115
Regula cuiusdam patris ad virgines 165
Regula Macharii 164
Regula mixta 155, 165
Regula Patrum 156
Regula Tarnatensis 156
 Reimitz, Helmut 108
 Remiremont 157
 Réomé 158, 161, 164
 Rhine 110, 111, 112
 robe(s) of honour 59, 60, 61, 68
 robber, robbery 55, 56
 Roncesvalles 194, 205
 Rösener, Werner 75
 Rukn al-Dawla, Ḥasan b. Mu‘izz al-Dawla
 (Būyid) 53ff
 Rus’ 116
 Rusticula, abbess of Arles 158, 159
 Rutbil 124, 125n

saepa 155–7
 safe-conduct (s. *amān*) 58, 66
 Šaffārids 123, 137, 142, 143, 144n, 202
 Sahlān b. Musāfir 58
 Salang (Pass)(river) 131, 133, 134, 135, 136,
 142
 Sāmānid(s) (dynasty) 55, 63, 68, 123,
 138–144, 146, 202, 203
 Sāmāntadeva 144
 Samarqand 136
 Sarmāj 54, 59, 62, 63, 66, 69
 Sāsānid(s) 78, 123
 Saxons 103, 104, 105, 107, 110, 115, 215
 Saxony 111, 116
 Sebüktegin (rebellious slave general) 60
 Seljuq(s) (dynasty) 60n, 68, 141
 service (s. *khidma*) 57, 58n, 60n, 64, 65n, 66

 Shabānkāra (Kurds) 55, 57
 Shādhinjān (Kurds) 54
 Shāh Bahār 126, 128
 Shāhpūr I 200
Shār 140
 al-Sharīf al-Rādī 171
 Shibar (Pass) 126, 127n, 134, 136
Shīr 125, 140
 Shiraz 52
shukr (“gratitude”) 52
 Sībawayh 214
 Slavs 107, 115
 slaves, slavery 67, 68, 69
 military slaves 57, 59
 Swabia, Swabians 110, 111
 Soissons 161, 162
 Spain 205, 207
 St Gallen 161
 Stancliffe, Clare 159
 Stephen, abbot of Lérins 163
 Stephen, count and *missus* 38
 Swedes 116
 Syria 77, 81, 88, 115

 al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Shī‘ī 78, 79,
 80, 81n, 170
 Tang 123, 127, 135
Taqīyya 180
Tardīyyāt 78
 Tarmashīrīn 132, 134
taslīm (“surrendering a castle”) 64
 tax(es) 56, 58, 60, 68
 Theodoric the Ostrogoth 214
theodisk, lingua theodisca 114
 Theodulf of Orléans, archbishop 40, 102,
 104, 207n
 Theuderic II, king of Burgundy 156–7
 Thuringians 107, 111
 title(s)
 honorific titles (*alqāb*) 60
 Tosi, Michele 160
 Tours, Council of (567) 156
 Ṭukhāristān 125, 126, 136, 139, 146
 Turkshāh 137, 144n
 Turks 115, 116, 203, 204, 213

 Uḍḍiyāna 137n
 Umayyad(s) 74, 78, 79, 80, 85, 123

- vassal, vassality 52, 63, 66, 67
 Venantius Fortunatus 78, 154, 158, 159
 Visigoths 116
Vita Erminonis 109
- Wales 194–5
 **walhisk* 113
 al-Walid II 90
 Walker, Murdoch 159, 160
 Wāsiṭ 59
 Wickham, Chris 193
 William Tell 196
 Willibrord 102, 103
 Windād b. Aḥmad 54, 55
- Xenophon 76, 77
 Xuanzang 123, 127, 128, 129, 135, 146
- Ya'qūb b. al-Layth 136, 137, 138n
 al-Ya'qūbī, Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb 125, 126,
 128, 129
 Yazdigird b. Shahriyār 123
 York 102
- Zābulistān 124, 137
 Zagros (mountain range) 52, 65
 Zayd b. 'Alī 181–2
 Zayd b. Mūsā "al-Nār", Shī'ī rebel 169–184,
 208–9